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LETTERS

ON THE

CIVIL WAR IN AMERICA.

By HENRY ROMILLY, M.A.

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CHAPTER I.

ENGLISH OPINION AND THE AMERICAN STRUGGLE.

(About the 14th September 1861.)

To the Editor of the "Daily News."

SIR,—I find in your paper of Monday last, in report of the proceedings at a public meeting at heffield, the following words attributed to the Right Hon. J. S. Wortley in reference to the war n America: "The voice of humanity and the ublic opinion of the world must interfere to revent the further effusion of blood in so senseess and savage a war." May I venture to uggest that before the public opinion of the world proceeds to interfere, it may not be undeirable that the world should enter upon a fair nd impartial investigation of the merits of the uarrel? In all quarrels, public and private, there s a right and a wrong, and I submit that there is

much more of the ostentatious assumption of moral superiority than of practical good sense in this off-hand mode of dealing with the quarrels of our neighbours. Some persons, even Englishmen, may perhaps demur to these words, "savage and senseless," as applicable to the government and people of the Northern States of America. I am certainly one of them, and shall, at all events, put a few questions to myself, before I give in my adhesion to so unqualified a condemnation.

All wars, I am afraid, are "savage," whether in the best or in the worst of causes, but if it is meant that this American contest has been carried on (on either side) with unusual or unnecessary disregard of humanity, I would ask what facts there are to justify the charge. In a civil war, or in a struggle with a powerful rebellion, exasperation or terror has often led to acts revolting to humanity. The annals of Ireland, and more recently of India, I am afraid, attest the fact; but up to the present time what charge has humanity to make against America?

But the war is "senseless" as well as "savage," by which (in so far as regards the Northern States) I presume it is meant that the govern-

nent at Washington entered into it rashly, and nat it is waged for an object of no real value o the free people of America. I cannot put nore clearly than in the form of questions the ifficulty I have in assenting to either of these ropositions.

When a political party (under a constitution hich gives to everyone a voice in public affairs) outvoted in the election of its chief executive fficer, and thereupon, without alleging any ractical grievance which it is in the power of ne government to remove, raises the standard f rebellion, seizes the property of the general overnment, attacks its strong places by force of rms, and openly throws off that allegiance which nder the constitution it owes to it, can any an doubt what is the duty of that government? s officers are the trustees of the people, for hose benefit that constitution was framed, and taking office they promised, under the sanction an oath, that they would "preserve, protect, nd defend it." If, instead of doing so, they nter into negotiation with the rebels, are they ot guilty of a treasonable breach of trust?

When a people have for nearly three-quarters a century been living under a constitution

which was framed for them by some of the best and wisest men who ever lived; when, under that constitution, they have been uninterruptedly advancing in numbers, wealth, intelligence, and material comfort; have been protected by it from foreign invasion; have been (except upon that one terrible question of slavery, which they inherited from their English progenitors) secured by it from intestine troubles; have been raised by it from the condition of a set of insignificant independent states into the condition of one of the most wealthy and powerful states in the world (so that it is almost, if not quite, as certain a passport to the respect of the civilised world for a man to be able to say that he is an American citizen as to be able to say that he is an Englishman); when, I say, nineteen millions of people have for seventy years and more been in the undisturbed enjoyment of a constitution which has done these things for them, is it a "senseless" thing in them to stand up in defence of that constitution, when the very foundation on which it rests is openly attacked?

What rebellion is there recorded in the history of the human race, except this one, which has

ot had some act of tyranny or oppression, real r fancied, to allege in its justification ?

What is the grievance of the Southern States ? s it not a grievance of their own creation ? Have ney not, with their eyes open, chosen to sustain ociety upon a basis which is hopelessly incapable f amalgamation with the great principle of the reedom of industry, from which, in a greater egree perhaps than from any other source, is erived all that is great and good amongst men ?

If it was a necessary, however painful, duty in n English government to shed blood in order to ut down rebellion in Ireland or in India, why is a savage and a senseless thing in the people f North America to put down the rebellion of he apostles of slavery in the Southern States at similar cost of human life ?

Is it a proof of senselessness on the part of the eople of the Northern States, that they are capale of perceiving the difference between a mere ystem of Confederated States and the Supreme ederal Government under which they live ? Is not rather a proof of sense than of the absence f it, that they are sufficiently familiar with the istory of their country to know that it was for he express purpose of giving a principle of per-

manent coherence and vitality to the American Constitution, that their forefathers, in 1789, abandoning a system which was little better than a mere confederation of states, erected a general government which, within certain well-defined limits, should exercise supreme independent power over the entire body of the American people? When the Americans of the Northern States take up arms rather than admit the right of the government of South Carolina or Georgia to absolve the people of South Carolina or Georgia from their allegiance to the government at Washington, are they not fighting for a principle which involves their very existence as a nation? for how can they fail to perceive that what is true for Carolina, or Georgia, or Alabama, must be true for Maine, or New York, or Ohio; that the right of secession once admitted, nothing would remain to arrest the unlimited process of subdivision, and that their government would, from that moment, cease to be a reality as the government of a great nation?

Where, in the annals of mankind, are we to look for a just and necessary war, if a war for national existence be not one? That the war which the people of the Northern States are

now waging will be successful I feel little doubt, for I have no belief that the great work of Washington, Franklin, and their fellow-labourers is destined to perish at the hands of Mr. Jefferson Davis.

CHAPTER II.

ENGLISH OPINION AND THE AMERICAN WAR.

(Autumn of 1861.)

To the Editor of the "Daily News."

SIR,—Your leading article of Tuesday last will do great good in America. The people of the North will cheer one another and strengthen one another in the performance of a hard but necessary duty, and will endeavour to shut their eyes to the coldness of England. They may be assured that some day or other England will do them justice; in the meantime, the less they now think about Transatlantic sympathies, and the more they give themselves up to the business in hand, the more likely they are to come out of it with the approval and respect of the civilised world.

I cannot, however, admit that it was either natural or right, when this rebellion broke out, that the people of the North should have been

otherwise than deeply sensitive to the opinion of their English brethren. The cause of responsible against irresponsible government, and the cause of free industry against slavery, are not yet so clear in this world of ours that we can afford to lose any element of strength; and I know of no more important element of strength than the moral support which two great nations, in which the expression of opinion is perfectly free, render to each other. The irritation which the people of the Northern States have shown on this occasion is a true measure of the value they put upon our good opinion; and it will be an evil day for moral and political progress when two such peoples as those of England and America can no longer count upon each other's sympathy and encouragement in a good cause.

There is one circumstance which is worthy of observation in this matter. Sympathy with the North has not been more lively in France than in England, and yet the disappointment and anger seems to have been excited by England alone. This does not seem to me to be surprising, for if there be one word which, as I think, more exactly than another expresses the spirit in which the Northern cause (with a few

honourable exceptions) has been commented upon in England, it is the word "un-English." Not that their cause (except in a very few instances) has been openly condemned, but there has been (especially on the part of that one of your contemporaries which is rather disposed to put itself forward as the index, *par excellence*, of public opinion in England) just that style of criticism which, by representing success as hopeless, and the object as not worth contending for, operates the more effectually as a wet blanket upon a cause. I think the Americans of the North are justified in thinking that, in taking this line, the English people are neither true to their own character, nor to the antecedents of their own history.

For what were the great leading characteristics of this war on the part of the people of the North?

First. It was a war for legality. In a country which is ruled over by an arbitrary sovereign this may be saying nothing in favour of a war; but in a country whose government is freely chosen by the whole body of the people, it is saying everything for it. Not to sympathise with the upholders of the law in such a case is the last

thing that might have been expected from Englishmen.

Secondly. It was a war to preserve from destruction a cherished constitution. The constitution may be worth preserving or not worth preserving. We English are entitled to have our own opinion on that point. We may look upon our British Throne, Lords and Commons, as the perfection of human wisdom, and the American constitution as a delusion (not that I, nor, sir, I believe, will you, concur in the whole of this view of the matter), but we cannot deny the fact that the great bulk of the American people (all indeed whose judgments are not overborne by their personal interest in slavery) honour and love it. Not to sympathise warmly with a people who are ready to spend their substance and shed their blood in defence of the government they love and honour is thoroughly un-English.

Thirdly. It was a war against a rebellion which had been set on foot, not as an act of defence or vengeance against oppression, but with a deliberate purpose in reference to slavery. That purpose was, and is, to liberate the institution of slavery from all those restraints upon its

consolidation and expansion which necessarily arose from its being bound up (under one general government) with a system of free industry prohibitive of slavery. The government of the North had no power under the constitution, even if humanity had not forbidden it, to proclaim the emancipation of the slave, and endeavour by one blow to destroy slavery and preserve the constitution; but not one whit the less is it true that the war is (in fact, and from the necessity of the case) a war on the issue of which hangs the fate of slavery. Considering from what source English greatness and prosperity is principally derived, considering also what she has herself done to extinguish this greatest of all the curses which men have inflicted on their fellow-men, surely a hearty sympathy, if not a little enthusiasm, might reasonably have been expected from her in favour of the side of free industry in this contest.

Fourthly. It was a war to support and protect loyal subjects in the Southern States, held down and silenced by an armed insurrectionary government. If the true and loyal friends of the Union in the South had been numbered by hundreds instead of by hundreds of thousands, still the

abandonment of them would have been one of those acts which Englishmen, if the case had been theirs, never would have forgiven in their government.

I do not contend that nothing can be set against these considerations. War may be looked upon from very different points of view by men who have equally at heart the welfare of their fellow-men. I do not deny that a perfectly true-hearted philanthropist might have addressed the people of the North in some such words as these: "True, your cause is a just one, but success is doubtful, and the horrors of a fratricidal war certain; prudence and humanity call upon you, therefore, not to enter into this contest;" but I certainly do deny that in our own wars we Englishmen have put prudence and humanity before all other considerations.

CHAPTER III.

THE CIVIL WAR IN AMERICA.

(20th November 1861.)

To the Editor of the "Daily News."

SIR,—I find in a letter of Sir John Bowring to a friend in America, published in your paper of the 12th instant, the following words:—

"It does not appear to me that you are justified in calling the Southerners rebels. Our statesmen of the time of George III. called Washington and Franklin by that name."

Does Sir John Bowring mean to say that Washington and Franklin were not rebels? Is not a rebel one who throws off his allegiance to the established government of his country? Some of the best and wisest patriots that the world has produced were rebels. The Prince of Orange was a rebel, Hampden was a rebel, Washington was a rebel. The people of Milan, of Modena, and of Parma, in 1859, were rebels. Such rebels

ave been loved and revered, and their memory will continue to be held in reverence by their ellow-men so long as men continue to hate ppression and bigotry, and to desire the improvement of their race. There have been some ebellions with which no wise or good man could ympathise. Such is the rebellion which broke ut early this year in the Southern States of America; a rebellion set on foot, not to throw off a tyranny, but to rivet more firmly the chains of a tyranny; a rebellion set on foot, not to ecure the blessings of freedom more fully to the ntire body of the people, but to strengthen and erpetuate a system which deprives one portion f the people of all freedom, all rights, all hope f everything which gives self-respect and contentment, and moral progress to human life, for he material benefit of another portion of the eople. It is because the Secessionists are conscious that there can be no sympathy with their ause in the breast of any right-minded man or oman in any civilised country on the globe that ney are so anxious to make good the plea of gality. To prove that secession is not rebellion, ut the exercise of a constitutional right, they ave done all that the case admits of, and that

is little enough. They have put forth the fanciful doctrine that the constitution of 1789 was in the nature of a bargain between contracting parties, which any one or more of those parties, or which any one or more of any supposed successors of those parties in all time to come, might throw off whenever they were tired of the bargain; a theory which would deprive political authority of all stability and permanence under any form of government that the world has ever seen.

Sir John Bowring's condemnation of the United States government, and of the people of the North, is conveyed in what has now, in England, become almost a stereotyped form, viz., that of affectionate and disinterested solicitude for their welfare. He says: "We want you to be strong, and your policy makes you feeble; rich, and you are doing your best to impoverish yourselves; brotherly, and you are engaged in Cain-like slaughtering; happy, and what woes are in all your households; peaceful, and you are busied in wide-wasting war." These words are well calculated to touch the hearts of those Americans who read them. The only defect of them is that they are an appeal to the feelings, when

he thing that is wanted is to convince the nderstanding. All resistance by established uthority to illegal and unprincipled aggression nay be condemned in terms like these. The ords were as applicable to the government of reat Britain on the breaking out of the rebellion Ireland last century as they are to the United tates government at the present time. Common-laces, however forcible, on the distresses and lamities of war touch neither the one case nor ne other. There are occasions in the history of ations when these distresses must be endured r a time, to prevent mischief worse and more sting. Is this, or is it not, such an occasion s regards the government of the United States? as it in the power of that government, con-stently with its duty towards its true and ithful subjects north and south of the Ohio, nd with a reasonable hope of a permanently eaceful and just settlement, to enter into nego-ation with the leaders of this rebellion? This as the question to be solved. It was not a ry simple question in any view of the matter, nd all the eloquence in the world on the horrors civil war will not help the government of the nited States to solve it.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SLAVE CONFEDERACY.

(19th December 1861.)

"Liberty is always won where there exists the unconquerable will to be free."—Jefferson Davis to the Confederate Congress.

True, Mr. Davis; to win freedom nothing is required but the unconquerable will to be free. True of freedom, and true of every object of human desire. All that is necessary is the unconquerable will. But it must be unconquerable; the simple will is not enough. And what is it that makes the will of a people unconquerable? A people is unconquerable when it possesses that mechanical skill, those material resources, that energy of character, that power of combination for a common object, that habit of voluntary obedience to its greatest men, which are acquired by a very slow process (not the less infallible because it is slow) in all societies where there has already for a long period been enough of personal

edom to enable men to exercise, in combination
th each other, those powers of body and mind
ich God has given them. It is in this sense
l in this way that the English people has
come unconquerable, and the French and the
rman, and (God be thanked, that we can now
) the Italian. Nothing more true of a people
ich has already known what it is to be free.
ey may conquer a still more complete and
rfect freedom. Nothing more false of people
o have never known what freedom was.

Who knows better than you, Mr. Davis, that
ere are peoples who have never known freedom
any sense or in any degree; who have never
t forth their bodily powers except at the
lding of a master, and for the benefit of a
ster; who are fed by a master, and housed by a
ster, in the same way that a horse or a dog
fed and housed; who have never exercised
y powers of mind, because it is dangerous to
e supremacy of the master that they should
allowed to exercise such powers; who have
ver combined with other men for any common
ject, except under the eye of an overseer, and
an object in which they have no concern;
o have neither skill, nor energy, nor self-

respect, nor moral aspirations, nor pride in their country, nor sympathies with the happiness and progress of their fellow-men, simply because all these things are absolutely incompatible with the grinding tyranny under which they live? You will not deny that this is an accurate description of the four millions of black men who constitute one-third part of the entire people over whom this Southern rebellion has made you for a time the ruler. It is not of this part of your subjects that you are speaking when you talk of "unconquerable will." They have none of the qualities of mind or body which make a people unconquerable. Your system, carried out for a few generations, with the skill, the perseverance, and the perfect disregard of all considerations except the one great object of keeping up the tyranny which you and your whites have brought to bear upon it, is one which will fairly grind out of a human being all strong desires except the mere animal instincts which they share with the brutes. He knows nothing of unconquerable will, scarcely of will in any degree.

Amongst you and your whites there is, in truth, no want of energy. You have shown in the conduct of this war all the qualities of mind

nd body which distinguish a people who have ong been accustomed to govern themselves; ours is the unconquerable will; and were it not hat you have an equally unconquerable will pposed to you, there could be little doubt of he issue. But when you tell us that all this nergy is for freedom, we must be allowed to emur to the truth of the statement. In what espect, on what occasion, was your freedom nterfered with by the government against which ou have risen up in arms? I know of only ne kind of freedom which has been denied ou—the freedom, when you found yourselves n a minority, to impose your will (your uncon- uerable will as you call it) upon the majority. he constitution under which you lived gave you greater degree of freedom than exists under ny other government on the face of the globe, nd it gave you besides (what but for the most amentable moral supineness and the entire bsence of all sense of impartial justice would ave been withdrawn from you long ago), it ave you the right to keep four millions of your ellow-subjects shut out from the blessings of reedom, which they had as good a right to as ou had. If in your Southern States there was

a tyranny to be overthrown and the victims of a tyranny to be relieved, the tyranny was yours, and the victims were your four millions of negroes.

Yes, there was one other exception to the freedom of the white man in the Southern States, but that exception was one of your own making, and arose out of the terrible necessities of your system. There is one kind of freedom which is fatal sooner or later to tyrannies of all kinds, whether of a single man or of millions—the freedom to write and speak openly all we think. With that freedom (whether exercised by white man or black) it was impossible that society as constituted in your Southern States should long co-exist. You did not crush it, as more vulgar tyrants have done; you simply restrained it within those limits which would suffice to keep your system out of harm's way. You restrained it by penalties quite as effectual, if not quite so well defined as those of a law, penalties of the nature of which we have often read in your newspapers, with all that indignation which lawless violence usually excites.

The word "freedom" in your mouth is a simple mockery. It is a word of bitter irony to one

part of your people, and it ought to be a word of shame to the other part.

You express the most confident belief in the success of your rebellion. Have you considered what is likely to follow that success? When your Confederacy comes to be established as an independent state, do you suppose that a large majority of your people will submit to a system which gives to a minority a practical monopoly of the lucrative property in living human flesh? Do you suppose that your non-slaveholding whites, who have shed their blood in this quarrel, will consent to be cheated out of their share of the fruits of victory? Do you imagine that they are so ignorant as not to know that the re-opening of the slave trade will practically demolish that monopoly? You look upon slavery as a wise and beneficent system, and you are the champion of free trade. As such, on what arguments will you rest your refusal to throw open the markets of the world to the slave importer? You regard the negro race as legitimate objects of sale and purchase, and you are the enemy of protection; if so, what reasons will you urge for protecting the slave breeder in Virginia against the competition of

Africa? Even if that part of your people who will unite to break down the monopoly of the large planters and slave breeders should be a minority, with what weapons will you oppose their will? You have given them a great practical lesson in the art of dealing with majorities. Do you suppose that they will be slow to profit by your instructions, and that they will hesitate, if you demur to their arguments, to throw the sword into the scale? When the re-establishment of the slave trade has no obstacle to fear from a government at Washington, what steps will you take to extricate yourself from the alternative of a second civil war, or of submission to the clamour for a measure which will bring upon you the open hostility of Great Britain?

Do not allow yourself to be misled by that sort of spurious patronage which a part of the English people have been giving to you and your so-called struggle for liberty. Do not delude yourself with the idea that the tongues of a certain number of members of Parliament, and the pens of certain dashing writers for the public press, half ashamed of the task in which they have been engaged, are infallible exponents of the heart and intellect of the

British people. Rely upon it that your cause as received no hearty support from the great ulk of the English nation. The best proof of t is, that not one word has been written or poken by any of us, high or low, in defence, r even in extenuation, of the institution you re fighting for. A sort of insipid flirtation as been carried on, which you, of course, hold p to the world as a genuine passion; but be ssured it has nothing genuine about it. Do ot be deceived by appearances; our real hearts re with your opponents. True, they have ffended us by a good deal of braggadocio; many f us are a little jealous of their increasing power; few of us cannot endure their democratic rinciples, and others of us are suffering distress consequence of the civil war. But these ings are trivial, or local, or temporary. They ill pass away, and the true spirit of the British eople will return. The genuine sympathies Englishmen (I am not now speaking merely the members of the London clubs) will come ck sooner or later to the great North Ameri- n constitution and people, which, in union ith the British constitution, is the sheet- chor of the cause of responsible government;

and those sympathies never will come back (no, never, so long as we possess an intellect and a heart) to slavery and the slave trade.

The hostility of Great Britain! You will treat it as an idle menace. You will tell us that our great principle of non-interference is a mockery, if you are not to be allowed to carry on your cotton and sugar cultivation in the way you please. I answer, that there is no principle, however great, which is not subject to be set aside when it runs counter to a principle still greater than itself, of still more extensive and intimate application to the interests of mankind. You have seen us, in the Russian war, set aside our principle of non-interference. Do you expect us to hesitate when we see half a century of incessant warfare against the slave trade about to be rendered futile, at the very moment of final success, by a stroke of the pen from you and your Southern Legislature?

You may tell me that these fears are vain; that you and your people have no wish to re-open the slave trade. I know that there is no wish amongst you to agitate that question now, simply because it would ruin you in your war with the United States to do so. What your

views or the necessities of your situation may be when (as you so confidently predict) you have brought the war to a successful termination is a very different question.

CHAPTER V.

THE CHIVALRY OF WAR.

(16th October 1862.)

To the Editor of the "Daily News."

SIR,—Can you tell your readers what is the chivalry of modern warfare? Lord Enfield, in the course of a speech at Hounslow, which I find reported in the "Times" of the 6th October, said to his constituents of Middlesex that the "war in America had been unrelieved by any of that chivalry which has usually been displayed in other wars." This chivalry of war, it seems, has no existence on the other side of the Atlantic, but is common on this side. But what is it? On this point Lord Enfield leaves us to our unassisted powers of observation. Are we to look for the chivalry of a modern war in the mode of carrying it on, or in the cause for which it is waged? For instance, a war to extend

ne market for the manufactures of a country ; a war to increase its territorial possessions ; a war against the political principles of a neighbouring country ; a war to expel from the throne of some small neighbouring state a sovereign whom we believe to be unfriendly, in order to set up in his place a sovereign whom we believe to be friendly, to our supremacy in that quarter of the globe ; a war for that mysterious entity the balance of power ; do these elements, or any of them, in the origin of a war, constitute it a chivalrous war ? or is the chivalry to be found in the mode of carrying on the war ? For example, to blow prisoners from the cannon's mouth, or to hand them over to the tender mercies of a cruel, semi-barbarous ally ; or to exterminate enemies wholesale, by burning or smothering them in caves ; are these some of the characteristics of chivalrous wars ? I suspect, in opposition to Lord Enfield, that the chivalry, or want of chivalry, of modern warfare amongst civilised nations is pretty much the same all over the world ; but Lord Enfield seems to be like the rest of us. We see distinctly the faults and follies of a rival people and government three thousand miles away, but are stone-blind to the

faults and follies which lie at our own door. Perhaps Lord Enfield has discovered that chivalry is the virtue of disciplined as contradistinguished from undisciplined armies, and looks upon the slaughter of human beings, when (as in the Crimea or Lombardy) it is the result of combinations skilfully carried out in accordance with the most improved practice of European military science, as possessing certain attributes of grandeur which are wanting to it when it is the result of the irregular efforts of a set of farmers and artisans who have been imperfectly converted into soldiers for the special occasion.

Can you explain, sir, why it is that our public men, who on most other subjects are full of good sense and good logic, seem to divest themselves of those qualities the moment they touch upon the subject of America? In the Parliamentary recess of last year many of them told us that the war on the part of the North was a senseless war. But the broad facts contradict that statement. Argument would be thrown away in such a case; it is sufficient to observe that from the beginning the North has been fighting in defence of a constitution which the American people had received from the wisest

nd most virtuous of their ancestors, under which r three-quarters of a century they had lived in eace and security, had grown up into a rich nd powerful nation, and (to use the language of Ir. Gladstone at Newcastle) had run "a course f prosperity and advancement without example nd without a single break." To have allowed Confederacy of rebel slaveowners to destroy ne Union, in order that slavery might be set ree from all further resistance to its indefinite xtension ; to have allowed this, in the vague hope hat out of the wreck something in the way of overnment might turn up, which should enable he free States to go forward in their course of ranquil and honourable prosperity and independence, this would, indeed, have been senseless. If here was want of sense, it was not in the people of the free American States, acting as they have done in support of their government, but in he men who could speak contemptuously of heir conduct.

One great politician gave us to understand that he whole world, including America itself, would be great gainers if the American nation were broken up into some half-dozen or more of fragments, each little independent state being left

to support itself against the others and against the rest of the world as best it might, on the European principle of the balance of power, a principle which has certainly not been very efficacious in preventing wars, unjust aggressions, and territorial robberies on this side of the Atlantic.

With one great luminary of the political world, followed by a host of smaller ones, the events in America became the occasion for vague declamation on the horrors of civil war, unaccompanied by any attempt to point out what was right or what was wrong in the conduct of the parties to the quarrel; distinguished enemies of slavery having nothing to say against a conspiracy to place slavery on a par with free labour as the corner stone of human society.

By one set of speakers it was alleged that government in America was a contract, one of that peculiar kind which binds nobody, neither the people who made it nor the descendants of the people who made it, nor the people who, having neither made it nor being descended from those who made it, have for long years been quietly benefiting by it; a vast national partnership, any one or more of the partners

eing free to knock over the partnership at any oment, and set up a separate concern of their wn. This mode of settling grave questions of olitical morality or law, by vague analogies, erived from a different class of subjects, was ardonable in a schoolboy, but scarcely in in-ructors of grown men.

The favourite dictum regarding the war, viz., at on the part of the South it was a war of dependence, and on the part of the North a ar of conquest, was either unimportant or untrue. he wars which mankind have been in the abit of designating as wars of independence ave usually been wars of oppressed subjects gainst tyrannical rulers. Those which they ave designated as wars of conquest have usually een wars of unprincipled ambition. In this ense the description was untrue. Nobody has id, or could think, that, on the part of the orth, this war was one of unprincipled ambition; , on the part of the South, one of resistance tyranny. In this sense of the words (the ly important one) the description is obviously lse; the only sense in which it is true is e altogether without importance. Of course one can deny that rebels who have thrown

off their government, whether their cause be one which good men approve or one which good men abhor, are engaged in a struggle for independence; nor, in a certain sense of the words, can it be denied that if the North comes off victorious in the war it will have obtained a "conquest" over the South. The descriptions are true in one sense but not true in another; true in a sense merely literal and insignificant, manifestly untrue in the sense which should determine our moral judgment in reference to the conduct of the parties. To put forth such a description is to use ambiguous language calculated to produce in the minds of an audience a state of feeling not justified by the facts of the case. No Englishman would have accepted such a description if the events had happened in his own country. If the Scotch people should abjure their allegiance to Queen Victoria, with a view to the establishment in Scotland of an independent society founded on communism, or some other pernicious or impracticable system, and if Queen Victoria should march an army across the Tweed to put down the Scotch rebels, it would be perfectly true, in a certain sense, that Scotland was fighting for independence, and

gland fighting to conquer Scotland; but no
llience of sensible men, even on the other
e of the Atlantic, would receive such a de-
iption as an important truth to serve as a
undwork for moral approbation or disappro-
ion.

I quite admit, sir, that when our representa-
es address large assemblages of their less
hly educated fellow citizens during the Parlia-
ntary recess they are doing a very useful
ng; but is there not some risk that the prac-
e will fall into contempt, if they take no more
ins than they seem hitherto to have done to
. well-prepared and wholesome intellectual
od before the companies which meet together
be entertained by them?

CHAPTER VI.

PUBLIC OPINION AND SLAVERY.

(12th January 1863.)

To the Editor of the "Daily News."

SIR,—Our upper ten thousand seem to be in an unsettled state of mind on the subject of slavery. No one knows exactly whether they are for it or against it; whether they are in favour of the system of perfect freedom between employer and employed, as practised in England, or in favour of the system of paternal power enforced by the lash, as practised in the Southern States of America. Some thirty years ago we Englishmen, educated and uneducated, seemed to be all agreed that slavery was a thing fertile of mischief, and incapable of being turned to good, and, so far as our colonies were concerned in the matter, we swept it away. We were

ll pleased and unanimous in so doing, and ve been very proud of ourselves on that count ever since.

But, if no good thing could be extracted out slavery in the West India Islands, what hope good does it hold out in the Southern States America? No one, however, can say what od society in England thinks or does not nk about the matter. The course good society ok nearly two years ago, when this war broke t, was somewhat equivocal. It breathed no rd in favour of slavery, but it denied that very had anything to do with the war. The r was, however, a war between the slavery tion and the free-labour section of the country ; e Vice President of the Confederate States had blicly declared that slavery was the corner stone the society which it was the object of the rebel- n to disconnect from the free-labour States ; the very question had two years before produced il war in Kansas ; the signal for the rebellion s the election of a President whose claims the confidence of his supporters rested on views in regard to slavery ; for years slavery l been the subject of constant angry dis- sions in Congress, the anger on one occa-

sion rising to murderous violence; and when Southern men wished to invoke the utmost hatred of their companions against a citizen of the North they called him "abolitionist;" and yet slavery, we were told, had nothing to do with the war! It was not denied that slavery was a moral and social disease which would be aggravated or mitigated by the course which this war might take; but a disease was one thing and a war was another, and slavery had nothing to do with the war! No, the Southerners were in rebellion for cheap calico (of which they were buyers), and cheap sugar (of which they were sellers); for the defence of their hearths and homes (which, prior to their own rebellion, no one had ever dreamt of invading); for the defence of their wives and children (whom, prior to their rebellion, and subsequent to it, no one wished to molest); but, above all, for independence (which, except in so far as independence was another name for their own treason, no one had ever threatened); but the one thing for which they were *not* in rebellion was slavery! Good society did not foresee that, as events succeeded each other in America, the slavery question would, from the necessity of the case, force

itself day by day, more and more, into every discussion of the objects and probable results of the war, and of the right mode of carrying it on.

When the attempt any longer to ignore the slavery question in connection with the war became hopeless, the opinion of good society took a new form. It maintained its high moral disapprobation of slavery as a social theory; but it assumed that the cause of emancipation had as little to hope from the nineteen free-labour States as from the eleven seceded States; forgetting that in the free-labour States slavery was looked upon as a tolerated evil, the extirpation of which was a question of time and opportunity, and that the Vice President of the seceded States had proclaimed slavery to be the most perfect form of human society. Having placed the two parties to the contest on the same level as regards the slavery question, it brought forth, in justification of the rebels, a new theory of the inalienable right of men to set up and lay down their governments at their own unfettered will and pleasure, which would have made Marat or Thomas Paine hesitate and pause.

An abolitionist of the Wilberforce school might still, however, console himself with the reflection that, if good society looked smilingly on rebel slaveowners, it contrived at least to look frowningly on slavery itself. But how long is this comfort to last? How long will those who are all tenderness for the criminal retain their horror for the crime? A writer in the "Quarterly Review," at the close of his attack on the people and government of the United States, briefly suggests the happy and contented theory of slavery; and one of your daily contemporaries, a distinguished organ of the nobility and gentry, informed its readers, only a few days ago, that the Bible contains not a word to prove slavery unlawful, and that if slavery be opposed to the spirit of Christianity, the same may be said of luxury and fine linen, and many other things which very good men amongst us tolerate or practise. This latter article was probably what in technical language is called a feeler, and some time may possibly yet elapse before the leaders of opinion in good society determine whether it will be wiser to smile or to frown upon it. If the latter, the spirit-of-Christianity argument will, of course, be quietly allowed to drop, and

he patronage of slavery will not be permitted o advance out of the safe practical ground which it at present occupies into the more langerous ground of theoretical approval.

As an old abolitionist I earnestly hope that t may so turn out. To sympathise with the riminals, bad as it is, is not so bad as to ustify the crime. Anything is better than a eturn to the open unblushing defence of an xploded wickedness, for no better purpose han to gratify angry feelings against a rival ation.

Our neighbours on the other side of the Channel are watching our course on this slavery question in no very charitable spirit. Already, n the "Revue des deux Mondes" for December, ve are described as a people which no longer oes homage to the God of Justice and Humanity; which has allowed King Cotton o dethrone the Bible, and the name of Wilerforce to sink into a synonym of amiable mbecility.

That the lower and middle classes of Englishnen are as staunch as ever in their abhorrence f slavery, no one who knows them can doubt; ut as little can it be doubted that a large

portion of the upper ten thousand has allowed itself to be led, by a not very unnatural dislike of democracy, into a position as regards slavery which is worse than equivocal. For the honour of the country, the sooner they retreat from this position and join the ranks of the people the better.

CHAPTER VII.

ENGLAND AND AMERICA.

(20th January 1863.)

To the Editor of the "Daily News."

SIR,—Recent extracts from Northern newspapers seem to show that the state of English opinion on American affairs continues to produce a great deal of bitterness. I wish you could induce our Northern cousins on the other side of the Atlantic to take a sensible and practical view of this matter. If anyone can do this you can. Can you not make them understand that in an aristocratical country, so unlike their own, upper-class opinion, arrogating to itself the title of public opinion, very seldom coincides with the opinion of the great majority of the nation; that it is often the very reverse of the opinion of that more numerous class which, in worldly rank and wealth, lies below it?

There are two things which ought to be impressed upon the people of the Northern States. First, that the feelings of the industrial portion of our nation are certainly not against them in this contest; and secondly, that some allowance ought to be made for the want of sympathy of our ruling classes.

There can be no doubt on the first of these points. If any portion of our people might have been expected to take a strong part against that one of the two parties to this contest who, by blockading the Southern ports, cut off a supply of cotton, which is to them the very staff of life, it was our two million cotton operatives, and those who are dependent on them. But our cotton operatives have borne their sufferings in silence; and have not only abstained from any expression of hostile feeling towards the Northern cause, but on several occasions have openly expressed feelings of an opposite kind; and the same thing may be said of our operative class generally, and of the greater part of what may be called our middle class. We are in the habit of calling our labouring people the uneducated classes; but, educated or uneducated, they often take a plain, straight-

orward view of a question like this, which has more of truth and wisdom in it than is to be found in all the elaborate special pleadings of the speakers and writers who represent the class above them. An intelligent operative cotton spinner or mechanic will be quite unable to refute the "Times" or the "Saturday Review," or to expose the fallacies contained in the speech of the accomplished member for the borough of A or the county of X; but, nevertheless, he will remain as firmly convinced as ever that slavery must be at the bottom of this question; that the talk about a gallant struggle for freedom, when applied to a people which holds in bondage three millions of their fellow-creatures, must involve some hideous fallacy; and that he cannot reasonably be expected to feel any very ardent desire for the ruin of the only nation in the world whose constitution gives a reality of political power to the class to which he himself belongs.

Now, as regards our ruling classes and their organs of the press, I admit that there is a good deal to irritate the Northern people in these reiterated phrases of "cruel aggression," "war of conquest," "Southern stand for freedom,"

"anti-slavery hypocrisy," "unwieldy empire," "mere federation of states," "tyranny of majorities," "national partnership," "right of a partner to retire from the concern," &c. But then America must remember that she has offended us in a tender point; that we stood in a sort of parental relation to her, and that she did the most provoking thing which a child can do to a parent when she embarked in her worldly career, setting at defiance most of our cherished principles, and was signally successful. A century ago America was an insignificant dependency of Great Britain; two years ago she was an independent nation, rivalling Great Britain in population and wealth, holding nearly as high a place amongst the nations of the world; as great in her institutions of philanthropy and education, as great commercially, and not as great in her naval and military power only because her system of government rendered the maintenance of large standing armies and navies unnecessary. If, in achieving this position of greatness, she had followed in our footsteps, we might have treated her as a master treats a favourite pupil, and felt in her success a pride unmixed with jealousy. But she chose a path of

er own, and has prided herself upon having one so. We looked upon our constitution as e most perfect form extant of representative overnment; she chose a different form. We ad combined a large amount of practical free- om with monarchy; she not only rejected onarchy, but, by a special provision, excluded for ever from her constitution. We have opened e door to the democratical element slowly and sitatingly; she threw the door wide open at er very first step. In her Federal Union she t up a principle of government which, by our cent comments on it, we have shown that e do not even comprehend. We cannot en- ely console ourselves by saying that her ccess as a nation has been in spite of her stitutions, or, at all events, not in consequence them. For, although the possession of a large tent of fertile unoccupied territory is favour- le to progress under all circumstances, yet it not sufficient alone to account for an advance constant and rapid; and indeed the greatest ise that can be given to a government is, t it secures an unimpeded field for the spon- eous advance of a people in numbers, material nfort, intellectual and moral culture, and the

arts of peace. America is shocked that our ruling classes should be watching with evident complacency for the moment when the chain which holds together all the elements of her greatness shall snap, and her Union be a thing of the past. She expects them to be magnanimous, but she forgets that magnanimity is not a virtue of nations, and that, notwithstanding their recent demonstrations in favour of an extended suffrage, there is nothing which our ruling classes really, and not unnaturally, dread so much as the success of democratic government.

Of one thing the people of the North may rest assured, viz., that it is of much more importance to us than it is to them that we should think justly on this great question, with all its bearings upon slavery. Their course is a plain one; it is to do their duty without looking to the right hand or to the left, and not to allow themselves to be diverted from the real question which has been forced upon them. That question is, how far the integrity of their country, the maintenance of the constitution which the founders of the nation bequeathed to them, and the extirpation of slavery, are

orth the terrible sacrifices by which alone ose objects can be permanently secured. If ey make any miscalculation on this subject, is much more likely to be by underrating an by overrating the greatness of the permanent bject. Nations, like individual men, have the rongest temptation to escape from present ffering by abandoning great principles. De ocqueville, with all his admiration for America, redicted that if the Union ever came to be jeopardy she would yield to that temptation. o what other cause but the want of courage look present sufferings in the face are we attribute the fact that this slavery question, hich might have been settled at a comparavely trifling cost of national suffering fifty or xty years ago, has ended by involving thirty illions of people in calamities the most frightful, nd difficulties of bewildering perplexity? And what other result can any reasonable man ok forward, if this disease of slavery be not xtirpated with a firm hand now, than a conulsion more extensive and more calamitous at me future time? It is idle to suppose that y good is to be done in such cases as these looking three thousand miles across the ocean

for sympathy or advice. The ruling class of one nation is the worst possible judge of the duties and necessities of another. If the Northern people ever doubted this, their doubts must have disappeared when they found that two Englishmen out of three of those who write and speak against their cause are indebted for the success of their arguments to the fact that they ignore the very existence of the Union, and the constitution on which it is founded, as a legitimate object of attachment to the American people. We Englishmen have had our civil wars and our rebellions, and we determined for ourselves the course it was right for us to pursue; and did not shrink from present suffering for a great object. America alone can determine whether it is the part of wisdom and virtue to suppress this rebellion, or to submit to it. Whatever they determine, let them do what they believe to be right, without troubling themselves about the hostility of English newspapers, or the speeches of English patriots. Patriotism is not different in England from what it is elsewhere. It is love of England, not love of anything out of England. America ought to know our ruling classes well

ough not to expect of them that they should
l any desire for the maintenance of American
eatness. Let her take a leaf out of our book.
hen we were in the midst of our last Irish
fficulty, did we trouble ourselves about Ameri-
n sympathy with that wicked and contemptible
ellion? We silenced their misplaced sym-
hy by crushing its object. Let America do
ewise. Success always commands respect, in
country more than in England. If the
rthern people succeed in preserving the integ-
y of their nation, and do what is right about
very, not forgetting that their apathy of
ree-quarters of a century's duration in this
tter throws a heavy weight of responsibility
on them, their English detractors will change
ir tone or sink into insignificance. Above all,
certain of their newspapers cease to threaten
with war at some future time, as a fit
urn for our present want of sympathy. Even
the barbarous principle of revenge, no return
ld be more utterly unfit; for the only part
our people which would suffer very severely
a war with America are those very classes
o believe in the justice and desire the success
the Northern cause.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SOUTHERN CONFEDERACY.

(12th March 1863.)

To the Editor of the "Daily News."

SIR,—Looking at the great distinguishing features of the American question, it may safely be said that the organs of our ruling classes never entered upon a task of greater moral difficulty than when they undertook to make out a case for English sympathy with the cause of the Southern rebels. The broad facts of the case at its very commencement were briefly these :—

1st. The rebellion (even on the extreme supposition that the whole people of the seceding States were *bonâ fide* parties to it) was a rebellion of a fourth part of the inhabitants of the country against the remaining three-fourths, who, the moment the constitution was menaced,

unanimously rallied in its support; and that nstitution, from the day of its birth up to e moment when the rebellion broke out, d received the willing obedience of the entire ople.

2nd. The rebellion was directed against a vernment of which it had never even been leged that it had made any attempt to oppress y man or body of men, or to administer its wers in a spirit of injustice or partiality.

3rd. It was a rebellion of six millions of people no possessed the same political privileges in respects as the remaining twenty-one millions.

4th. It was a rebellion against a government hich was elected by, and responsible to, the eat body of the citizens.

5th. It was a rebellion against a constitution hich specially prohibited the making of any v abridging the freedom of speech or of the ess, or the right of the people peaceably to emble and petition the government for a lress of grievances; and it was not alleged of e government that it had ever attempted to aside those provisions of the constitution.

6th. It was a rebellion by the only portion the people which had ever systematically

acted in defiance of the spirit of these last-named provisions of the constitution; and this they had done by the use of personal violence towards all persons who gave utterance to certain opinions, which opinions (be it observed in passing) are professed by the entire British people.

7th. It was a rebellion against a constitution, the framers of which, foreseeing that the time might come when some amendment of its principles would be rendered necessary, had made special provision for such amendments, thereby affording a specific remedy to any portion of the people who might think that its operation was injurious to their interests; and the Southern people had never made any attempt to avail themselves of that constitutional remedy for the redress of any grievances under which they might suppose themselves to labour.

Finally, it was not a rebellion originating in a spontaneous movement of the people, drawing to itself leaders, but one of which the origin was exactly the reverse of this; one, namely, in which certain political leaders, backed by a large body of armed followers, accustomed to acts of violence, and unscrupulous as to the

haracter of the support which they gave to any ause which they espoused, made the first move- ient, and appealed in its support to the suf- rages of the people, suffrages which, in such a ase, might be made to assume the appearance, ut could have none of the reality, of freedom.

It is not too much to say of such a rebellion hat it was opposed to all the acknowledged ules of English political morality; for it ori- inated, not in a popular movement, but in a onspiracy of political leaders; it was directed gainst a government which emanated from the eople itself; it was not preceded by any eclaration of grievances, or any appeal to the egislature; it had three-fourths of the people f the country opposed to it; it was not founded n any denial of political rights, on any restraints n the freedom of public discussion, or any terference with commercial, political, or reli- ous equality. What could there be in a rebellion uch as this to engage the sympathies of English- en? of Englishmen who pride themselves pon being the great apostles of moral force; hose practice for many generations it has been make known their grievances in no other ay than by peaceful remonstrance, to seek

redress on no other field than the floor of Parliament, and who at this day are so doubtful of the lawfulness, in any case whatever, of armed resistance to established governments, that even to Italy, in her great struggle against the tyranny of Austria, they gave a reluctant and tardy support. There ought to have been some extraordinary and specific grounds of justification for this Southern rebellion to outweigh in the mind of an Englishman such overwhelming general grounds of condemnation; but there are, in fact, no specific grounds of justification which will bear examination.

It may well be doubted whether our ruling classes as a body were disposed to consider the question in a spirit of impartiality. The Southern cause had this paramount merit in their eyes, that if successful it would break up the Union, introduce into the country a principle of dismemberment which would be fatal to America as a great nation, and afford an apparent practical refutation of the republican theory of government. Accordingly the Southern sympathisers did what all men do who are more intent upon proving a case than disposed to give themselves much trouble in discovering the truth; they shut

eir eyes to every circumstance which might ggest a doubt of the justice or necessity of the bellion, and made industrious use of such argu- ents in support of their view of the matter as uld be obtained at home, or imported from e other side of the Atlantic. Those arguments ay be reduced to three heads : first, the tariff eory of the rebellion ; second, the right-of- an-to-govern-himself theory of the rebellion ; d third, the anti-slavery pro-slaveowner argu- ent.

The first of these arguments was imported om America. It alleged that the Southern eople were suffering from partial legislation in e shape of a commercial tariff, which taxed nportant articles of their consumption to pro- ote Northern interests ; that this was the great outhern grievance, and the cause of the rebellion. e history of this plea in favour of the Southern bellion is curious. From the first the Southern iefs were aware that it could be of no service them in America, and it cannot be said that was ever seriously put forward there. If all e Southern journals from New Orleans to chmond, and all the Northern journals from ashington to Boston, were ransacked at this

day for a single sentence referring to the tariff as the *bonâ fide* ground, or one of the grounds, of the rebellion, or as a serious impediment to peace, that sentence could not be found. The plea was devised for the express use of the Southern emissaries to England; and, inasmuch as ninety-nine Englishmen out of one hundred were entirely ignorant of the facts, and the plea could easily be presented to them in such a form as to hold out to Great Britain the prospect of commercial advantage as a consequence of Southern success, it was not ill chosen for its purpose. Accordingly the plea of an oppressive tariff was received with marked favour by the Southern sympathisers in England. The great principle of free trade was triumphantly appealed to, notwithstanding that the recognition of that principle by our ruling classes was less than twenty years old; no awkward questions were asked, and the eyes of the sympathisers remained closed to all facts which would have endangered the success of the plea. In the "Annual Register," a work which is supposed never to wander out of the path of dry unadorned fact, the tariff theory was propounded in the following words:

"The election of Abraham Lincoln as President of the United States brought the feeling of discontent on the part of the Southern States to a crisis. They had long been opposed to the commercial policy of the North, which was in direct antagonism to their own interests. They were producers of raw material, cotton and sugar, and tobacco, and had no manufactures whatever. The North, on the contrary, was yearly increasing in prosperity and wealth as a manufacturing nation, and to protect their manufactures Congress had imposed a system of highly protective duties, which kept foreign imports to a large extent from competing with them in the markets of the South. By the last revision of these duties, called the Morrill Tariff, many articles were in effect prohibited from entering their ports. This pressed heavily on the South, where the planters had not only to pay an enhanced price for the necessaries of life, but were unable to exchange their exports with the products of Europe, and especially of England, so advantageously as would have been the case under a system of free trade. This had long been a source of bitter discontent, and the representatives of the South not unreasonably complained

that their constituents were unfairly taxed to promote the prosperity of one half of the Union at the expense of the other moiety."—(Vol. 103, page 219.)

This clear, well-written statement may, perhaps, go down to posterity as authentic history, and yet it is scarcely too much to say of it that every successive sentence from the beginning to the end adds something to the proof of the writer's ignorance of the facts of the case, facts which an anxious desire to get at the real merits of the question could scarcely have failed to elicit.

1st. There was the fact that, although as consumers of cotton clothing and some other articles the Southern people were losers by the tariff, as producers of sugar they were gainers by it. 2nd. There was the fact that, admitting the tariff to be unequal in its operation, the chief sufferers were not the Southern but the great North-Western corn-growing sections of the country, because in their case the loss was without compensation. 3rd. That in the Southern States, for a quarter of a century, all agitation of this question as a practical grievance had been unknown. 4th. That for a similar period,

during which Southern influence at Washington had been all powerful, the tariff as a great political question within the walls of Congress had been equally unknown. 5th. That during the whole of that time no protective tariff had ever been adopted without a vote in its favour by Southern representatives large enough, if given against it, to have ensured its defeat. Whatever ground the South might have had to complain of the effect upon their interests of a system of protective duties, it is quite true that that ground of complaint was increased by the most recent of the tariffs, the Morrill Tariff; but then the Morrill Tariff could by no possibility have become law if Southern members of Congress had been doing their duty at Washington, instead of hatching treason in the South.

It is not, perhaps, very surprising that, with an inaccurate and imperfect statement of the case placed before them by interested parties sent across the Atlantic to defend a particular cause, Englishmen should have been led to believe that the Southern people were in armed rebellion to liberate themselves from a partial system of commercial legislation; but it is very surprising, and something worse, that Englishmen should

have attempted to justify an armed rebellion for such an object. Even supposing there had been no sugar duty to countervail the loss to the Southern people of a system which enhanced the price of certain articles of their consumption, was such an injury as this one to justify a recourse to arms, not, be it observed, as a last resource after the failure of peaceful protest and remonstrance, but as the first step in the demand for redress? What was the injury to the people of the Southern States of America, arising from an enhanced price of Northern manufactures, as compared with the injury to the people of Great Britain twenty years ago, arising from the law which gave to the landlords a practical monopoly in the supply of the people's food? The English people strove against that unjust corn law by the press, by petitions, by public meetings, and by motions in Parliament; but, even at the end of five-and-twenty years of fruitless agitation, not one man in the kingdom, even of those who held extreme opinions in regard to popular rights, ever dreamt of rebellion. If it had been necessary to prolong that agitation for fifty years instead of thirty, it would have been done, and not one man in all England would have looked upon a

recourse to arms as otherwise than criminal ; and yet, in the case of America, there are Englishmen who, professing to believe that the Southern rebellion had its origin in a similar cause, defend that rebellion. For eighteen months and more have Southern sympathisers, in newspapers and at public meetings, been lamenting over the horrors of this civil war, and putting up prayers for its cessation ; and yet they justify the people who, if their view of the origin of the rebellion is correct, deliberately plunged America into those horrors, without any preliminary appeal to the Legislature, on a question of some twenty per cent., more or less, in the price of certain articles of Northern manufacture.

In bare justice to Mr. Jefferson Davis and his fellow-conspirators they must be acquitted of such wickedness and folly as this. Let English gentlemen who have taken up this tariff theory of the rebellion consult their own good sense. Let them look at the broad facts which are open to the whole world. From its birth to the end of 1860, that is for seventy-one years, the Federal government is acknowledged and obeyed by the American people. At the end of that time that government is seen to be in arms to resist a

violent attempt to break it up. The government, supported by the people of twenty States, is opposed to a rebellion supported by the people of eleven States. A civil war desolates the country for nearly two years. The soil is wet with blood. Fathers, mothers, and wives see their sons and husbands go to that desolating war without a murmur. Hundreds of millions of treasure are expended on each side. Nearly the entire industry of the rebel States is destroyed, and no attempt at accommodation is made on either side. What is the cause of so unexampled a disruption of society?

For what are the parties contending? If the tariff theory is correct, it is a question of money, and one of no great magnitude; and whichever party carries the day, it will obtain a gain in dollars, which at the end of a century may, perhaps, compensate it for a fourth part of its share of one year's cost of this war. What reasonable man can fairly be asked to believe this: to believe that the South is ready to spend its last dollar, and lay down its last life, for the difference between its loss by the enhanced price of Northern manufactures and its gain by the enhanced price of sugar; that the North

is making no less a sacrifice for no greater an object; and that the North-Western corn-growing States are spending their blood and substance in order not to be deprived of the privilege of being taxed on both sets of articles?

CHAPTER IX.

THE SOUTHERN CONFEDERACY.

(19th March 1863.)

To the Editor of the "Daily News."

SIR,—Having in my former letter disposed of the tariff theory of the rebellion, I now proceed to consider the right-of-man-to-govern-himself theory of the rebellion. When a body of men, leagued together to break up their government, lay claim to the approbation of the world, they ought to be in a condition to show that the powers of that government are administered in habitual disregard of the real, permanent welfare of the great body of the people, and that, except by physical force, there is no reasonable hope of redress. This has been the ordinary case of rebellions against despotic governments, of Italy against Austria and the sovereign tools of Austria;

of the Dutch Provinces nearly three hundred years ago against Spain; of Poland against Russia at the present day. Even a representative government *bonâ fide* chosen by the people may take a mistaken view of the real interests of its subjects, and give them reasonable ground of complaint; but it never can be necessary for the people under such a government to employ physical force in order to obtain redress; nor, if they are unanimous, or nearly unanimous, in their condemnation of the measures of the government, is it possible that redress should be long delayed.

Another case, however, is conceivable under a representative government. The policy of that government may be selfishly dictated by a majority of the people, having interests at variance with those of the rest of the community, and remonstrance on the part of the suffering minority may be disregarded for a period of time so long as to give to that minority a moral claim to the approbation of the world if, in despair of the efficacy of other measures, they have at length recourse to physical force, and determine to set up a state and government of their own. It is conceivable that such might have been the case of the Southern States of

America, but all the world knows that such is not their case. Indeed, their case is more nearly the opposite of this; for, until they raised the standard of rebellion, and by so doing united three-fourths of the entire people against them, the slave-owning portion of the country, almost from the very birth of the nation, had a preponderating influence in the Legislature, and in the Presidential elections.

This being the state of the case as regards the Southern rebellion, it was necessary, if it was defended at all, to defend it on the ground of some supposed right of the people, in whole or in part, under the American constitution, or under all constitutions, to depose their government at their own free will and pleasure, without thereby coming under any moral responsibility towards the world at large to prove that that government had failed in its proper duties.

It would be idle to enter into a discussion of the general question of the right of a people to throw off its government when they are dissatisfied with it. There is nothing in the nature or origin of governments which will afford a principle to which that question can be referred with any possibility of a solution. All that

can be said in the matter is this, viz., that no government, in fact, hesitates to put down resistance to its authority if it is strong enough to do so, and that no people hesitates to shake off a government they hate if they are convinced that the government is not strong enough to prevent it. Both governments and peoples, of course, make miscalculations as to their comparative strength, but history is more full of unsuccessful rebellions than of unsuccessful attempts to put down rebellion; and it is fortunate that it is so, for if governments generally were so weak as to be unable to support their authority, the world would be a scene of confusion and violence absolutely incompatible with all progress, material or moral.

When the case occurs of a government in arms to oppose an armed rebellion, the world may and does, and it is very fit that it should, discuss the question of the respective rights of the parties in the sense of moral right, right to the moral approbation or otherwise of the civilised world, and form its own judgment on the merits of that question; but any discussion of rights in any other sense than that is not only futile, but unintelligible.

Certain Southern sympathisers have laid it down that a government founded originally on the free consent of the people, such as the government of the United States, loses the very principle of its existence, and cannot, therefore, any longer be rightfully maintained, when that consent is withdrawn. But consent is revocable or irrevocable. It is not self-evident that consent by the people of one generation is revocable by the people of a succeeding generation. It was the business of the Southern sympathisers, if they put forward this doctrine, to prove that the consent of the American people of 1789 was revocable by a fraction of the American people of 1861, but they have made no attempt to prove this. The truth is, that this principle of vitality by popular consent, if it means anything, means the consent of the people now living, not the consent of the people of a period long past, and is just as good a principle of vitality for the constitution of America as for that of Great Britain. Whatever right the people may have to throw off their government, that right is derived from the fact that they detest and repudiate it now; not from the fact that their predecessors approved and accepted it fifty or

one hundred years ago. It would be a mere insult to the understanding of a Pole, for example, to tell him that although the Americans of the present day had a clear right to repudiate their government, because it was freely accepted by their predecessors in the last century, they, the people of Poland, had no similar right to repudiate the Russian tyranny, because eighty or ninety years ago it was imposed by violence upon the Polish nation of that day. The Pole knows only too distinctly and painfully that the question is not one of rights but of military power. As a matter of right, it is an absurdity to suppose that an absolute monarch has any better title to the obedience of his subjects than a representative government, or a constitutional monarchy any better title than a republic. The doctrine is made up of palpable contradictions. It implies that the title of a government to the obedience of its subjects is strengthened by the circumstance that they never promised to obey it. It implies that a title originating in physical force is better than one originating in free acceptance. It assumes that when a government says to rebellious subjects, "Neither you nor your predecessors ever engaged to respect our authority,"

it is using a better argument in defence of its right to resist those rebels than if it were able to say to them, "Your predecessors unreservedly accepted this government, and we hold you to that engagement." As a matter of fact, the government will in either case put down resistance to its authority, if it is strong enough to do so; but when the question comes to be discussed as one of rights, it seems to be an insult to a grown man of sound mind to tell him that a claim to obedience which at its origin was formally admitted is not so good as one which was never admitted at any time.

The author of a pamphlet recently published by Mr. Ridgway has, *faute de mieux*, pressed into the service of the Southern cause this more than doubtful maxim of political science. A nation which owes its origin to a rebellion is for ever after morally incapacitated from resisting rebellions. It is not necessary to bestow many words upon the doctrine. If we Englishmen bring it to bear against America, we must, at all events, admit it in our own case, unless we will consent to give up the Revolution of 1688 as one of the great foundations of our constitution. When the people of England sent the reigning

sovereign about his business, and put a foreign prince into his place, they were rebels, wise rebels, no doubt, but still rebels, and (if this precious doctrine be true) were from that time forth morally incapacitated from resisting all treasonable attempts to change the succession to the English crown. The author of the pamphlet has discovered that up to 1861 the American people never ceased to honour rebels and despise their rulers; but inasmuch as this, if true, is a defect, not a merit, in their character as a nation, they deserve praise, not blame, for having at length cured themselves of it, and discovered that governments ought to be defended and traitors punished. This writer, by parity of reasoning, would, no doubt, argue that a reformed thief is not entitled to protection for his property because, at a former period of his career, he had been a friend of robbers and an enemy of the police.

A distinguished member of the lower house of Parliament, and of the legal profession, in the course of a speech in defence of the Southern cause, asked, with a certain air of triumph, "How it happened that republicans would not allow republicans to form a republic?" When a clever

man asks a question with an air of triumph, and no one answers it, his audience sometimes conclude that no satisfactory answer is possible. If they would only call upon him to put his question fairly and intelligibly they might find not only that an answer was possible, but that the question answered itself. So it is in this instance. The question, if fairly put, would be stated thus: "How does it happen that in a republic a majority of the people will not allow a minority to destroy the general government and set up a separate republic of their own?" The answer now becomes obvious. "Because if they did allow it they would be knocking away the foundation on which all government rests, and would be bound in common consistency to return to the savage state." In the same way a man might ask, with an air of triumph, "How it happened that electors would not allow electors to make an election?" and his hearers might suppose that something very profound had been said. But if the question were put in an intelligible form, thus: "How does it happen that a majority of electors will not allow a minority of electors to upset the official return and make a separate election of their own?" the audience would at once

perceive that the question was anything but a bit of wisdom.

A true Englishman would believe it to be his duty to fight to the death in defence of his constitution against any Englishman or body of Englishmen who should set up a right to secede from it; but when a true American takes exactly the same view of his duty in relation to his constitution, certain patriotic but illogical Britons forthwith set him down as a savage and a fool. What are the points of difference between the two constitutions which should make resistance to rebellion a duty in the citizens of the one country and a crime in those of the other? The only important points of difference are these: the one gives the suffrage to a larger proportion of the people than the other; the chief executive officer of the one is an elected president, and of the other an hereditary sovereign; and the one government was formally accepted by the people, and the other never was. Now, one might as well attempt, with the philosopher at Lagado, to extract sunbeams out of cucumbers as to extract out of these points of difference, or out of any points of difference, between the constitution of Great Britain and that of America,

any principle on which to rest a right of the former to the submission of its subjects which is not equally applicable to the latter. The truth of the matter is this. If Englishmen wish to make good the doctrine that Queen Victoria may rightfully put down rebellion, and President Lincoln may not, there is only one way of doing it. They must unsay all that they have been saying for a century past about the moral power of England, and fairly repudiate all foundations for government except that of physical force. They may then speak with some effect to America. They may say to her :—

"Your political system has no stability. It may give way under you at any moment, for it is founded on moral approbation, which is liable to constant change. Our system can never fail us, for it is founded on physical force, which never changes. Your system implies a virtual engagement to govern for the welfare of your people, and if any part of your people tell you that you are not doing so, you must take the consequences of your failure. Our system implies no such engagement, and our position cannot be affected by failure in what we never undertook to perform. If subjects of ours rise

against us, we can consistently meet them with the bayonet. If subjects of yours rise against you, the mere fact of their doing so is a proof that you have failed in that moral engagement which you virtually took when you were weak enough to give them a constitution; you are therefore morally bound to abdicate, and allow them to look out for other rulers."

If such language as this were addressed to President Lincoln, the world might think it strange in the mouths of Englishmen, but it would, at least, be intelligible; and, when people are discussing rebellions as questions of right, this is undoubtedly a great merit. But it could not be expected to have much practical effect on the conduct of the American President; for, even if he could be got to understand why a government of physical force, which rules for the benefit of its subjects from an abstract love of virtue, like that of Great Britain, has a better title to resist rebellion than one which does the same thing in performance of a virtual engagement, like that of the United States, he would still, perhaps, consider himself bound by his oath of office, wherein he called God to witness

that he would "preserve, protect, and defend" the constitution of his country.

On the whole, I think, it must be conceded that the people of the Southern States had no other rights in this matter than are possessed by the peoples of other countries, unless the constitution of 1789 specifically gave them such rights; but I need scarcely say that this is not so, and that no constitution, not framed by a set of lunatics, ever contained a provision for its own destruction. It has been said that in a federation of states, if any one or more of the states desire to withdraw from the federation, it is idle to suppose that they can be prevented from so doing; that it is in the very nature of a federation that there should be a power of secession. But the existing constitution (that of 1787) is not a mere federation of states; it is a government over the entire body of the American people. So far from being a federation of states, it was framed for the express purpose of superseding a federation of states; or (to speak more accurately) of superseding a constitution which, although it also possessed a central government, had given so little real strength to that government, that in practice

it became little better than a mere federation of states.

Under the constitution of 1787 the sovereign power was divided between two sets of governing bodies, a set of local or state governments, and a single general government. When the people in 1789 accepted that constitution they made themselves subject to two sovereigns. Their allegiance became a divided allegiance; but the framers of the constitution took effectual steps to prevent it from ever becoming a conflicting allegiance, for they carefully marked out the field within which the general government was to exercise its sovereign authority; and it was provided that whatever powers were not declared by the constitution as coming within that field should be considered as coming within the field of the powers of the state governments. To prevent all possibility of serious difficulty arising from conflicting claims, a supreme court was created for the express purpose of deciding contested points of jurisdiction. The general government had its own separate machinery for the purpose of enforcing obedience to its commands, and it has always, in fact, used that machinery for that purpose.

Now, the circumstance that the field of the jurisdiction is limited does not detract from the efficacy of the sovereign power within that field. It neither does so in the case of the general nor in that of the state government; and the general government has no more power (under the constitution) of absolving a citizen or a body of citizens from its allegiance to its state government than the latter has of absolving the people of its state from their allegiance to the general government. The doctrine of a constitutional right of secession can be placed on no ground which is not hopelessly irreconcilable with those provisions of the constitution (and the constitution, be it observed, is an existing written document) which expressly define the powers of the general government over the entire body of the American people. The government of Washington has, in truth, as full a right to treat as rebels all citizens who refuse to obey the orders issued by it, within the limited field of jurisdiction which the constitution has given to it, as the government of Queen Victoria has to treat as rebels all Englishmen who should resist her lawful authority within the more extended field of

jurisdiction which the constitution of Great Britain has given to her. The citizens of Louisiana or Massachusetts may properly, in some particular case, say to the general government, "You are exceeding your powers, and we will resist your orders," and if they should say so, the Supreme Court of the United States is there to decide for or against that pretension on their part; but they have no more right, under the constitution, to say, "We will resist all your orders, and throw off your authority altogether," than any body of Englishmen would have to say the same thing to the government of Queen Victoria.

The people of the Southern States can make good their right to secession neither by an appeal to their written constitution, nor by an appeal to any general principle attaching exclusively to republican forms of government. If that be so, the only right they have is that which all rebels have, viz., the right to the moral approbation of the world, if they can prove that they deserve it. The world has the same means of judging of their conduct as of that of other rebels, and will pass judgment for or against them accordingly.

CHAPTER X.

THE SOUTHERN CONFEDERACY.

(2nd April 1863.)

To the Editor of the "Daily News."

SIR,—I addressed myself in my last letter to those who contend that Southern secession rests on constitutional right, and I showed there was no foundation for any such supposed right which was not either untrue or unintelligible. There was, however, one class of persons in England who, having no sympathy with a cause which inscribed slavery on its banner, holding the alleged tariff grievance in contempt as an unworthy pretence, and being too clear-headed to allow an unprovoked rebellion to be palmed off upon them as a legitimate transaction, nevertheless believed that it would have been wise in the United States government and people quietly to give up to the rebels the

outhern half of the country, and establish hemselves as a separate nation in the northern alf. In favour of this view one argument ould be urged which, so far as it goes, is a ood argument for submission to all demands which are backed by threats of violence. Submission, of course, arrests the threatened violence. f no resistance is made to rebellion, bloodshed s (for the time at least) averted. The inconenience of this course is, that submission to an unjust demand is apt to engender further unjust demands; and, unless it be contended that it is or the interest of mankind to give a free license o brute force, it would probably be found that n the long run the interests even of peace tself suffer more by submission to a first injustice than by resistance to it.

No proceeding of the Southern sympathisers has had more success than that of dwelling upon he horrors of this civil war, and entirely passng over the Southern rebels as being in any degree responsible for those horrors, and yet it would not seem to be difficult to detect the fallacy of the argument of the footpad, who, demanding your purse with a loaded pistol at your head, contends that there is only one

possible way of averting bloodshed, namely, by your quietly handing over your money.

The chief argument, however, of this class of persons was, that the cause of slavery derived strength from its connection with the great American Union, and would be weakened if left to maintain itself by its own unassisted resources; that secession, if granted, would obstruct, not advance, the principal object of the seceders. The argument, whether sound in any sense or for any purpose, was, at least, not sound to the extent of justifying an open expression of sympathy for a cause which defended on principle an institution which the sympathisers condemned on principle. But, setting principle aside, was it sound as a question of mere expediency? The connection with the Union, no doubt, gave a certain moral prestige to slavery, but it also practically confined it within certain limits; and although, if left to itself, slavery would be incompatible with progress in all the nobler qualities of a people, it would not be incompatible with the formation of a powerful military government endangering the independence of peaceful neighbours. A contest between a great northern free-labour nation and a great southern slave-

holding nation might be as unfavourable to the former in all the arts of war as it would be humiliating to the latter in all the arts of peace. To equal the North in honourable rivalry as a wealthy, civilised, educated community would, no doubt, be hopeless, but to stop the sources of her prosperity by military aggression might not be so hopeless. If, in a purely military point of view, the South became the more powerful state, the cause of slavery would be a gainer, not a loser, by that shortsighted policy which had allowed a community of slaveowners, with their black slaves and their white dependents, to erect themselves into an independent nation.

The question, however, whether, on the whole, it was expedient or otherwise for the North to submit to secession is open to reasonable discussion, which is much more than can be said of the question of the Southern right to secede. But who was there competent to determine the question on the ground of expediency? Certainly not the President. He had his duty as chief magistrate to perform, and that duty was plain and imperative. His oath of office obliged him "faithfully to execute the office of President of the United States, and, to the best of his

ability, to preserve, protect, and defend the constitution of the United States." That constitution gave him sovereign powers over the entire people of the thirty-four states which constituted the American nation. He could not, without treason to the people which had elected him, make himself a party to the breaking-up of the nation by abdicating his own high office in regard to the people of eleven out of thirty-four states, and absolving the people of those eleven states from their allegiance to a government of which he was only one of the component parts. If President Lincoln could do this, there seems to be no reason why an English sovereign should not, on his or her own responsibility, and without consulting Parliament, abdicate his or her sovereign rights over the people of Scotland or Ireland. If President Lincoln could not do this without the consent of Congress, neither could Congress do it without his consent. Nor could both united do it; for the constitution gave them no power, as trustees of the nation, to submit to a demand on the ground of expediency which they had decided to be inadmissible on the ground of right. The demand being unconstitutional, there was only one way

of dealing with it, and that was to refer it to the people ; and even that course involved what I am justified in calling the absurdity of treating an assertion of a right to break the nation into two parts as a proposal to amend the constitution.

If the question had been submitted to the people in the mode prescribed by the constitution, it must, from the necessity of the case, have been stated to them in some such words as these : "Eleven out of the thirty-four states which constitute the American nation have declared their determination to separate from the remaining twenty-three, and to create an independent nation and government. Their declaration is not in the nature of a proposal to be submitted to the votes of the people, but is an assertion of a constitutional right. The President and Congress of the United States deny the validity of any such right, and are prepared to treat any attempt to carry it out as an act of rebellion, unless you, the people of the Free States, to whom this question is now referred, determine that it is expedient rather to submit to this illegal demand than to incur the evils and miseries of war by resisting it."

To this question the people might certainly, without difficulty or delay, have replied in the negative, thus: "We will not consent to a dismemberment of the nation at any time, in any form, or under any circumstances, and we call upon our government to do its duty in resisting this illegal demand." But they could scarcely have replied in the affirmative without having the question more particularly defined. Nor could any congress but a congress of imbeciles have proposed such a question to them without some attempt to clear up the many points on which a rational man would require to satisfy his mind before proceeding to say "yes" or "no."

I will suppose the voters of the Free States to express in a series of questions the doubts and difficulties requiring to be removed before they could vote upon this question; and I would observe that what was a doubt and a difficulty to the voter would probably be a doubt and a difficulty to the President and Congress.

1st. If, after seventy years of union, we submit to this illegal demand, and allow the nation to be separated into two parts, what probability is there of our successfully resisting the further progress

of dismemberments ; and if the nation should be broken up into a series of comparatively small independent states, each state requiring to take precautions against the possible aggressions of its neighbours, and against the ambition of more distant governments, what better mode are we likely to find of arresting the evils of that condition of things than to reconstitute precisely such a federal government as that which it is now proposed to us to destroy ?

2nd. The demand of the eleven seceding states must be more precisely defined before we can say " yes " or " no " to it. Do they waive all claims to the four slave states which have not seceded, Kentucky, Maryland, Delaware, and Missouri ? Do these states wish to remain under their old constitution, or to join this new Confederacy ? How are their wishes to be ascertained ? If by a vote of their people, on what ground can we call upon the minority to submit to the decision of the majority, when we ourselves, being a large majority of the entire American nation, are yielding to an unconstitutional demand of a minority of the nation ?

3rd. Before we can entertain this demand in any shape we must have reasonable evidence

that it represents the *bonâ fide* wishes of a large majority of the people of the eleven seceding states. But history has taught us that a *de facto* government, backed by a large body of armed supporters, is not able, even if it were willing, to propose such a question as this to the people with such safeguards as to relieve the voter from all fear of personal ill consequences, in the event of his vote being opposed to the known wishes of that government; and in the present case we are not aware that any measures to secure the freedom of the voter were even attempted.

4th. Assuming slavery to be entirely abolished in the Northern States and maintained in the Southern, what measures is it proposed to take in regard to the treatment of fugitive slaves? Is a slave found upon Northern soil to be acknowledged and protected as a free man, or is he to be handed back to his Southern master? If the former, will not the condition of the people of the border country be one of incessant irritation, liable at any moment to break out into acts of violence, and certain within a very short period to bring on war between the two countries? If the slaves are to be handed back to their masters,

how is systematic resistance on the part of our Northern people to acts most regugnant to their feelings to be prevented? and what means is it proposed to take to counteract the intensity of those feelings when the master claiming the fugitive shall have become the citizen of a foreign country?

5th. If a separation should take place, the continued prosperity of our Northern section must depend in a great degree upon our retaining a communication with the sea by the Mississippi. What security can there be for this great object which shall not be dependent on the contingency of the Southern Confederacy maintaining itself as a single state, and preserving its relations of peace with us and with the great governments of Europe? But this contingency appears to us to be full of doubt. The Southern Confederacy must either retain the federal and republican form of government, or adopt some government on the European model. In the latter case our Northern government will be forced, in self-defence, into the system of great military establishments, a system from the evils of which it was one great object of the framers of our constitution to preserve us. In the former case the risk

is great, that this first secession will be followed by other secessions, and that the Confederacy will be broken up into a series of independent states not powerful enough singly to resist any of the ambitious governments of Europe, and unable, perhaps, to concur in any system of free navigation of the great rivers.

6th. Whatever form of government the Southern Confederacy might set up, we must expect them to reopen the slave trade, which will bring them into direct collision with the great anti-slavery governments of Europe, and will afford to the latter an opportunity of obtaining a footing on American soil to the south of us. How is this danger to be avoided ?

7th. Is it reasonable to believe that a government which owes its existence to a gross breach of the faith which civilized men owe to their fellow-subjects will hesitate, on the first favourable opportunity, to repudiate any settlement we may now make with them, if anything is to be gained to the Confederacy by so doing ?

8th. The power and stability of a highly democratic form of government like ours depend entirely upon the degree of support which the great body of the people give to it in times of

difficulty and danger. If we call upon our government to submit to its own dissolution on the very first occasion in its history of open resistance to its authority, what hope is there that we shall afterwards succeed in making a nation of our own twenty-one millions of loyal subjects? Shall we not be reduced to the alternative of giving up our republican constitution and submitting to what in Europe is called a strong government (which we take to mean a government backed by standing armies and navies), or of attempting to restore to life a principle of government which by our own act we have made worthless and contemptible?

Finally, we are aware that there is a provision for submitting proposed amendments to the constitution to the free votes of the people of all the states, but we find no provision for submitting to a part of the states a demand emanating from the rest; nor do we think that a separation of the nation into two parts can, by any latitude of interpretation, be considered as an amendment of the constitution. But we do not deny that there may be extreme crises in the history of nations when the people may be properly called upon to determine

questions which were not foreseen, and are not recognised by their constitution. We accordingly waive all objections on this score, if our doubts and difficulties on other points can be removed.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SOUTHERN CONFEDERACY.

(4th April 1863.)

To the Editor of the "Daily News."

SIR,—In my last letter I stated a few of the difficulties which would have occurred to the Northern people if a direct appeal had been made to them in favour of the Southern demand to be allowed to retire from the Union; but inasmuch as by the constitution a majority of three to one was required to give validity to any constitutional change, and inasmuch as the known feelings of the Northern people at the beginning of 1861 may be said to have precluded the possibility of the Southern demand being admitted, even by a bare majority of votes, Congress showed its good sense by refraining from making any such appeal to the people.

I am aware that some of the arguments which I have put into the mouths of the Northern people will appear to certain English critics altogether unimportant. The ruling class of one country can seldom be got to understand the attachment of the people of another country for a system of government which is different from theirs. There are Englishmen, both Whig and Tory, who are as incapable of seeing any salvation for a people outside the pale of that particular combination of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy which, modified by a free press, makes up the British constitution, as many a New Englander is incapable of seeing any sufficient security short of a republic for the individual freedom of the citizen. To a man who has only one measure for the worth of all political institutions, viz., the degree of their approximation to the English model, the Federal Union is incomprehensible as a thing worth contending for. He is unable to understand how any reasonable people should spend money and blood in the attempt to keep alive a thing so entirely without value or practical use. He looks upon it as a sham, taken up by the Northern people as a cloak

for their angry passions. He speaks of the war on the part of the North as a mere outbreak of revenge and hate. He defies them to give any intelligible account of their objects. He designates their conduct as savage and senseless, inexplicable except as an explosion of impotent wrath. And yet it is beyond question that the Federal Union is the bond which has held the American States together; it has made a great nation of them; it was the work of men, Washington, Franklin, and the rest, against whose wisdom and virtue he has never ventured to breathe a word, and it is besides a system of government, for a country of vast extent, which may be proved to possess some good points which are wanting to our European system of military government and the balance of power. If not quite two years ago an American citizen had called upon his countrymen to support their government in resisting this rebellion, he might with truth have spoken of the Union in some such terms as these :—

"For the sake of peace, and to avoid the horrors of civil war, your self-styled friends on the other side of the Atlantic urge you, in the name of prudence and humanity, to give up the

Union. One word with respect to prudence and humanity. People judge very differently of the proper occasions for the exercise of those virtues in their own case and in those of their neighbours. You will find nations who have looked on with undisturbed complacency while their government was engaged in wars which were unprovoked, which were entered into for purposes of unredeemed selfishness, or carried on in a spirit which certainly did not allow vigour to be weakened by humanity. You will often find such nations, when they come to pass judgment on their neighbours, blind to every circumstance which may make a war justifiable or necessary. Now, I say that prudence and humanity, and I say more, that the mere instinct of self-preservation, forbid you as a nation to hesitate, if you think yourselves strong enough to put down this rebellion, in preferring civil war to separation. Your existence as a peaceful and prosperous nation depends upon your not allowing of any subdivision of the Union, on any pretence or under any circumstances. Once admit the right of secession, and there is nothing to stop the progress of dismemberment. But, indeed, the evil of a division into half-a-dozen

independent states would not be very much greater than that of a division into two. The one great advantage of the Union is that it excludes all international jealousies and fears, and all the consequences of those jealousies and fears. Let our country be occupied by two great states, wholly independent of each other, and the question will necessarily arise in each of them, how far the other can be trusted to keep within its own limits, and to conduct itself like a quiet and peaceable neighbour. There can be nothing approaching to certainty on such a point. The most ordinary prudence will oblige the weaker power of the two to take some defensive precautions. Those will lead to counter measures of defence. Large naval and military establishments will speedily follow. If the peoples and governments of Europe can find no adequate security but in fleets and standing armies against the possible aggressions of their neighbours, what is there to make the case different in America? You will say, perhaps, that your republican constitution makes it different; that national jealousies originate in the grasping policy of monarchical or aristocratical governments; and that republics may go on peaceably side by side

for an indefinite period without having anything to fear from each other. Granting it to be so, what reasonable security would there be, on either side of the boundary line, that the republican form of government shall not be abandoned at any moment on the other side? By your existing constitution you are absolutely shut out from monarchy, and its framers never did a wiser thing than when they made that provision; for the mixture of republics with monarchies would have been a constant source of confusion and discord. It has been said that in republics the executive is always weak. True; but that weakness is no source of danger to you so long as your Union is maintained. Let it be broken up, and you are placed at once between two opposite dangers of the most serious kind; the danger on the one hand of your government being too weak to protect you against the aggressions of your neighbours, and the danger on the other of its strengthening itself by standing armies. Of the consequences of standing armies I need not speak. First, taxation to support them; and, secondly, constant vigilance to prevent their being directed against your liberties. From these evils and dangers you are now

entirely free. Whatever jealousies may exist among you, under your present constitution no mischief can arise, because no single state can have a fleet or an army. Break up the Union, and each state will take back into its hands these instruments of mischief. New York may march an army into New Jersey or Massachusetts, or send a fleet into the Delaware or to Portland, within six months from the day on which the Union ceases to exist. The Union relieves you from a state of things which is one of the chief causes of war amongst the peoples of Europe. Each European government is armed to the teeth at the expense of its people, in order to be always in a position to frustate the hostile designs of its neighbours, and the fact that it is so armed makes it an object of distrust to those very neighbours. Expensive military and naval establishments are maintained by E to defend him against the supposed ambition of F, who alleges a similar reason for maintaining an equally expensive machinery of defence. Each party is under constant temptation to grasp some small advantage in order to make his position more secure, and every time he obtains any small accession of strength all the other governments

are on the alert to discover if there is not some great scheme of aggrandisement on foot, and if he is not becoming too strong for the general safety. Your Union has preserved you from all this. The balance of power, a word of terrible import to the nations of Europe, is a word without a meaning amongst our American States, because they are united and unarmed."

An enemy of American institutions will exclaim, What! when you behold a bloody civil war raging in the very heart of the American Union, will you dare to say that a federal union tends to prevent wars? I do say so. It does tend to prevent wars by the most effectual and least expensive of all methods. My supposed American has shown what that method is. If other proofs were wanting, the eighty years history of the United States would be proof sufficient. It will not prevent all wars, because there are wars which arise from causes which are irrespective of the general principles of a government. A war arising out of an attempt to restore an expelled dynasty in 1745 proved nothing against the general principles of the British constitution. A bloody civil war in Ireland in 1798 proved nothing against the

general principles of the British constitution. It proved, perhaps, that the Irish people had not been treated in that spirit of justice and forbearance which wise rulers extend indifferently to every part of their dominions. The Sepoy rebellion was reasonable evidence of the vicious constitution of the Indian army, but was no proof of unsoundness in the general system of British rule in India. So a bloody civil war in America, arising out of a rebellion of slaveowners, is damning proof against the institution of slavery, but proves nothing whatever against republican or federal governments. It proves that people who, to save themselves from present suffering, tolerate great crimes, bring upon themselves, sooner or later, great calamities, but it leaves the questions of universal suffrage, elective sovereigns, and federal unions exactly where they were. These may be very bad things, but the American people, after long experience of them, do not think them so, and there is nothing in the civil war now raging in America to prove them so.

CHAPTER XII.

THE SOUTHERN CONFEDERACY.

(8th April 1863.)

To the Editor of the "Daily News."

SIR,—It is difficult to imagine a more perplexing spectacle than that of a man who, while he holds in abhorrence a system of society which deliberately sacrifices one part of a people for the worldly benefit of another part, yet makes a parade of sympathy with a party which is bound together for the purpose of obtaining a more unimpeded field for the consolidation of that system. This, upon the face of it, seems to be the case of the English sympathiser with the Southern rebellion. Desiring the progress of the human race in intelligence, morality, and pure religion, and believing that progress to be incompatible with a system which makes one man the slave of another, he yet proclaims himself the advocate of a party which extols that

system as the most perfect form of human society, and which protests against all interference with the right to hold fellow-men in perpetual bondage. Beholding the great bulk of the white people of the Southern States reduced, by their contempt for regular industry, which is inseparable from the slave system, to a level as low as that of the black slave, he yet looks with complacency upon a proceeding which is making that white people the chief instrument in the perpetuation of their own wretched condition and moral degradation. Knowing that in those unhappy Southern States to discuss slavery is to sap its very foundations, he yet makes himself the friend of those who, partly by legal enactment and partly by threats and outrage, systematically crush all freedom of discussion on that subject. He indignantly protests against the imputation of abated fervour in his abhorrence of slavery, and yet deplores as a calamity the possible failure of an enterprise the proclaimed object of which is to establish slavery as the corner stone of the social edifice.

There seem to be only two grounds on which it is possible to rest an explanation of inconsistency so glaring. The anti-slavery cause, it may

be said, has no more to hope from the one than from the other of the two parties to this contest; but this, if true, although it might justify us in withholding our sympathy from the North, can in no degree justify us in extending it to the South. Again, on points unconnected with slavery, it may be said that there are grounds of approbation so strong as to leave (when all deductions have been made to which the slavery part of the question can fairly lay claim) a respectable balance of sympathy due to the Southern cause. Those grounds of approbation must be weighty indeed, if they are sufficient to outweigh the load of cruelty, folly, and injustice, which presses down the opposite scale. What are they? Approbation of a rebellion must either rest on the grievances of the rebels, or must be independent of grievances; it must either be sympathy with rebels because they are oppressed, or sympathy with rebels because they are rebels. In a former letter I have shown what sympathy founded on grievances has to rest upon in this case. The Southern list contains but one item, the tariff; and inasmuch as the appearance of the tariff in the character of a Southern grievance was subsequent in date to

Southern treason, and has never, out of Europe, been seriously put forward in that character, the most zealous sympathiser will not rest much of his sympathy on the ground of grievances.

But what is to be said for sympathy with rebels because they are rebels? Rebellion for rebellion's sake? Rebellion for no apparent purpose but that of exhibiting to the world the independent spirit and high military qualities of the rebels! Rebellion which, unless resistance to oppression be its object, or unless slavery be its object, has no intelligible object, no object other than that of Shylock :—

> Well, say it is my humour ; are you answered?

The position is too immoral and illogical to be supported by serious argument. Nothing but a boyish spirit of paradox, or utter moral blindness, could lead an Englishman to abandon the cause of settled governments in favour of a principle of universal anarchy, when he remembers that fifty years have not yet elapsed from the day when England was still engaged in a bloody war, which, at its commencement, she had justified on the ground that it was necessary to defend Europe against the anarchical principles of rebels.

On the slavery question the Southern sympa-

thiser puts his case in this way: he says, "On this question the North is no better than the South. In neither section of the country is there any real wish to put an end to slavery. The North dreads the black man more than he dreads slavery. The cause of emancipation has no more to hope from the Free States than from the Slave States. So far, therefore, as slavery is concerned, we can give our sympathy to neither party. We remain indifferent." Had our Southern sympathisers remained indifferent, had they kept all sympathy within their own breasts, this justification would at least have been plausible. Plausible, but nothing more. It has just enough of truth in it to satisfy those who either know nothing of the history of the slavery question in America, or who are unable to perceive the distinction between want of energy and virtue to strike down, at great personal sacrifice, an established institution which on principle is condemned, and the open approval and defence of the principle itself.

The history of slavery in the United States for the last forty years is the history of a series of conflicts between North and South on the floor of Congress, on election platforms, or in the open

ifield ; and at nearly every successive step the South gained on its adversary. Nor was this surprising ; for whilst the South (to use the words of Professor Cairnes), "thoroughly understanding their position and its requirements, devoted themselves deliberately, resolutely, and unscrupulously to the accomplishment of their ends," the North, perplexed by a constitution which contained a formal sanction of slavery, almost necessarily fell into a state of vacillation and disunion in regard to the character and extent of their resistance to slavery.

Professor Cairnes has given a full and most instructive history of that forty years' struggle between North and South. Of the Missouri compromise, the annexation of Texas, the war with Mexico, the Fugitive Slave Law, the fight for Kansas, the Dred Scott decision, the illegal revival of the slave trade, the election of President Lincoln, and, finally, the Southern rebellion, t may be said that each of them is one of a series of conflicts on the slavery question between North and South ; and the opposition of the North to the advancing tide of slavery was not he less real that it was often weakened by reachery and selfishness in its own ranks, and often

worsted by the power of its enemy, that power which the united, resolute, unremitting pursuit of a single well-defined object always gives to a political party. The Southern rebellion is but the last step in that struggle of forty years' duration.

After two years of a desolating war that rebellion is still unsubdued. The course which public opinion in England has taken on the subject is one which it was scarcely possible that either party in America should foresee. Indeed, English opinion in regard to this war has been as little uniform as American opinion in regard to slavery. The intelligent operative class, and the great bulk of the class immediately above them in the social scale, has taken one course, and the aristocratic class has taken another. The former, being little in the habit of looking beyond the broad facts which lie upon the surface of a question, regarded the war as one which, having sprung out of the slavery question, would in the end decide the fate of slavery, and, hating slavery, they refused their sympathies to the self-proclaimed champion of that cause. There was not in their case any of that repugnance to American principles of government which in the case of their superiors would so strongly counter-

act the abhorrence of slavery which is common to all classes of Englishmen without exception. The opinions and feelings of this the more numerous class of our countrymen, having however no established organ, are of course slow in manifesting themselves, and it is only within the last few months that the proceedings at numerous public meetings in the great centres of English industry are beginning to tell us what the lower and middle classes of Englishmen really think about this American war. It would have been well for their superiors if they also had been compelled to pause; but certain of their leaders in the press and in Parliament, taking upon themselves, although with little knowledge of the real feelings of the nation, to speak in the name of the nation, hurried them at a very early period into a position from which it is not now easy for them to withdraw without some loss of reputation. They have rashly committed themselves to sympathy with the Southern cause, and have hopelessly broken down in the attempt to place that sympathy on a tenable foundation of fact or principle. To do them justice, from the beginning they scornfully rejected the Southern appeal

to commercial interest, and would not allow all moral considerations to merge in the question of cotton or no cotton for the mills of Lancashire; but they have not been equally prompt in detecting the fallacy of the other pleas in favour of the Southern cause. The tariff, even if, in the character of a Southern grievance, it had rested on a foundation of fact, ought to have been seen to be untenable as an apology for an armed rebellion; and even if the constitutional right of secession could have been made good by an appeal to the American constitution, or to any intelligible principle of political science, still the mere legality of an act which was to involve a country in misery and bloodshed ought not to have been sufficient to procure for the actors the sympathy of men of sense and humanity. In no view of the question, however, is the position of the English sympathiser with the Southern rebellion more full of contradiction than in that of slavery. For what is that position? He abhors slavery, he ardently desires its extinction, he is justly proud of having cast it out of his own colonies thirty years ago, and yet he pats upon the back the champion of slavery in America, speaks words of encourage-

ment which go forth across the Atlantic to strengthen him in his design, and denounces his opponent as a savage and a fool. (Savage and senseless; these have been the favourite epithets.) The North, he says, is lukewarm in the good cause. He does not deny that the North has made a fight of forty years' duration against slavery, but then it was only a fight against extension, not a fight for abolition. The North has been wavering, divided, unstable in its opposition. The war has been not so much a war of blows as one of compromises. The labourer at the North dreads the competition of the free negro. The white man has a repugnance for the black man. The North is in arms to preserve the Union, not to abolish slavery. The prospect of abolition, if the North suppresses the rebellion of the slaveowners, is too uncertain and remote to command the sympathy of a practical man, and since he must give his sympathy somewhere, he will give it to the slaveowner. Such is the reasoning. Reduced to a maxim of practical politics it may be briefly stated thus: When some course of action, institution, or design, pregnant, as you believe, with mischief to mankind, is resolutely upheld and defended against

an opposition which you observe to be weakened by divisions and perplexity, be careful not to allow any moral influence you possess to be used in strengthening the hands of the divided and perplexed opponents of the mischief you deplore. The paradox is too flagrant. We refuse our support to a cause which on principle we approve, on the very ground which should make us give to that support all the efficacy in our power, viz., that the cause, having practical difficulties and embarrassments of the most serious kind to contend with, peculiarly needs the assistance of its real friends.

We Englishmen pride ourselves upon our great act of slavery emancipation, but the task we had to perform was a comparatively simple one. We had to convert less than a million of black slaves into free labourers in a few small islands, four thousand miles away, in which a white labouring population had no existence. If, instead of this, we had had to convert four millions, or even one million, of black slaves into free labourers within the limits of the British Isles, they being already occupied by a population of fifteen or twenty millions of free white labourers, and this in the teeth of a constitution which had formally esta-

blished the legality of that existing mass of slavery, we should be more ready to make allowance for the difficulties and temptations which beset the path of the people and government of the Northern States.

Be this, however, as it may, Northern weakness in a good cause will never justify English sympathy with a bad one. Put the case as unfavourably for the Northern cause as possible. Assume that the abolitionists are a small minority of the Northern people. Assume that there are not wanting at the North traders, both in politics and merchandise, who are ready to go all lengths with the champions of slavery; that the bulk of the Northern people are actuated by a selfish regard for the white race, rather than by any feeling of justice and humanity towards the blacks, and that, in their forty years' struggle with slavery, their object has been to keep slavery out of new districts which they were themselves about to colonise, rather than to deprive slavery of the ground it already held. Assume all this. Not one whit the less was it the duty of an English abolitionist to give all the support in his power to the Northern cause. If our friends are contending against something

which we believe to be mischievous and wrong shall we withhold from them our assistance because their situation, from causes for which they are not altogether responsible, is one of great complication and difficulty, because they are not so thorough-going in their opposition to the mischief as we think they should be, and because we believe that there is a mixture of selfishness in their motives? These things only make it more plainly our duty to support, assist, and advise them; it can never justify us in throwing our weight into the opposite scale. The course of the English friend of the negro at the breaking out of this war was a clear one. To the abolitionists he might have said, "We honour your perseverance and disinterestedness, and we will do all we can to help you to the end for which you are striving." To the interested opponent of slavery extension he might have said, "We will help you on your road as far as you will go with us, and we will endeavour to prove to you the folly and selfishness of stopping before you have got to the legitimate end of your journey (which is emancipation)." To the champions of slavery in the South, and their abettors in the North, he might have said

"Your road lies to the left, whilst ours lies to the right; we will go with you neither all your way nor any part of your way; we will put all the impediments in your way we can, and will do our best to prevent you from arriving at the end of your journey."

Whatever the men of impulse may think of the matter, such facts in the world's history as American slavery are not to be got rid of by the short simple sort of process by which a man crushes the head of a viper with the heel of his boot; and if we choose to frown down all American opposition to slavery because, as a problem in process of practical solution, it is not quite so thorough-going, unselfish, and rapid as we Englishmen (who now, God be thanked, have no practical anti-slavery problem to solve) would wish it to be, we must not be surprised if the mischief holds high its head for many a long day to come. If negro slavery should be driven out of the world, it will be by a long, complicated, and painful process. If any one doubts this let him read what De Tocqueville wrote on this subject thirty years ago. The men of infallible judgment and perfect purity of motives are not numerous enough, if the whole

earth should be ransacked for them, to carry such a work to its conclusion. If effected at all, it will be effected with the aid of a good deal of selfishness, and after the commission of many and grievous mistakes. Surely it is better that the English friend of the negro should consent to work for the good cause with such instruments as it is possible to find in the imperfect world in which he lives, and that he should help to make good any step in advance which seems to be possible in the existing state of the question, even though much should still remain to be done, than that he should turn angrily upon his American fellow-labourers because they are not so perfectly wise and virtuous as he believes himself to be, and go over to the opposite camp. The good cause will certainly not be promoted by the utterance of paradoxes to the effect that emancipation has more to hope from those who have taken slavery as their corner stone than from those whose opposition to slavery does not quite come up to a purely disinterested regard for the welfare of the negro race. The English emancipationist, in common with the rest of his countrymen, prides himself upon the practical

view which he takes of great questions. If so, let him consider this, viz., that it is a plain necessity of their situation, as a free-labour people spreading rapidly over new ground, that the Americans of the North should oppose by every means in their power the increase of the negro race and of slavery; that they should therefore prevent the renewal of the foreign slave trade, that they should give every discouragement in their power to the internal slave trade, and put an end at once and for ever to the system of extending the field of slavery by territorial aggression on weaker neighbours. They so understood their situation in that forty years' struggle with slavery. The great obstacle in their way was the political supremacy of the slaveowning interest at Washington; and if this rebellion should be suppressed that supremacy will be at an end for ever. When, at the end of forty years, the area of slavery has increased nearly twofold, it is idle to say that nothing would be gained to the cause of emancipation by stopping its further increase. The problem of emancipation increases in complication as the negro population and the area of slavery increase; and surely we are making a

forward step in the solution of a problem when we stop the further advance of processes which are constantly adding to the difficulties of the solution.

The assumption, however, that Northern resistance to slavery is in the main one of selfishness (worthless though that assumption is as an argument in favour of English sympathy with the Southern rebellion), is contradicted by well-known facts; for the two great emancipation measures of President Lincoln, the ultimate effect of which will be to open the labour markets of the North to the competition of the negro, and to throw upon Northern shoulders the almost undivided weight of pecuniary compensation to loyal slaveowners, have not been opposed by the great bulk of the Northern people. The opposition to those measures has come from very different quarters; first, from those leaders of the democratic party who go all lengths with the cause of slavery, and have so far miserably failed in the attempt to carry the bulk of the Northern people with them; secondly, from that party in England with whom all considerations give way to the single hope of seeing the

American Union broken up; and, thirdly, from certain abolitionists in England who would destroy slavery only if it can be destroyed on a principle of the purest disinterestedness, and without the smallest detriment to the lives, limbs, or purses of the Southern rebels; those rebels who have covered the soil of America with blood in order to maintain slavery in a condition of unimpaired vigour.

Again, put the Southern cause in the most favourable point of view possible. Assume, for the sake of argument, that no part of the Southern people has been coerced into unwilling support of the rebellion by those who have got into their hands the powers of government; assume that every man in the seceded states is heart and soul in the cause of secession; that slavery is in their eyes a wise and beneficent system; that in the course of the war the Southern people have given proof of virtues which we justly esteem, fortitude, valour, perseverance, disinterestedness; assume all this; it may prove that the South are likely to succeed in their object, and that, in so far as fortitude and consistency entitle

men to succeed, they deserve success; but how can it justify an Englishman in giving them his moral support, if the system which they seek to consolidate is in his eyes an unfailing source of misery and degradation, and one which for thirty years he has been labouring to destroy? This is not the first time that men have been seen to serve a bad cause with heroic self-devotion; and if we can only persuade ourselves that such men have a genuine belief in the excellence of their systems, be they what they may, Socialism, Slavery, Thuggism, or what not, we may not, perhaps, be called upon to carry our condemnation of their conduct beyond the point of treating them as a sort of conscientious madmen; but on what conceivable principle can it be right that we should give them our countenance, if the object they propose to themselves is one which we deliberately repudiate?

There is one intelligible ground, and only one, upon which an enemy of slavery may rest his support of the Southern cause. He may look upon Southern independence as an unintentional act of suicide, designed to extend and fortify slavery, but destined, in his belief, to undermine

and destroy it. If the Southern sympathisers had taken up this position, although it was open to the objection that to encourage criminals for the purpose of putting an end to crime is too crooked a policy to suit English morality, yet the position itself would have been intelligible. I venture, however, to think that it would have been mistaken. The Southern leaders must be considered the best judges of the most efficacious mode of consolidating their own system of society. (I do not mean to affirm that, as matters now stand, slavery is likely long to survive this war; but if slavery dies, it will die in consequence of the failure of the Southern cause, not in consequence of its success. It will die in defiance of large doses of English aristocratic sympathy, which would have kept it alive.) The Southern leaders, having almost uninterruptedly had the powers of the general government at their command, have sustained slavery in a condition of increasing vigour chiefly by a system of unscrupulous aggression on weaker neighbours. If the Southern Confederacy should be established, what is there to arrest that system? For a time, no doubt, they would be shut out from any territorial exten-

sion on their northern frontier, and there would no longer be a great American Union to serve them in their designs. But the south would be open to them, Mexico and the States of Central America, Cuba and other of the West Indian islands; and Africa would give them an inexhaustible supply of the human chattel with which to stock their newly-conquered territories. The machinery for carrying out that system would present no difficulty. A republican constitution would be quite unsuited to the altered circumstances of the country, and a strong military government would have a fourfold advantage; for it would keep in check the great democratic republic on the northern frontier; it would be the only efficient instrument in a career of territorial conquest; it would give occupation to a population of low whites, who look upon peaceful industry as degrading; and it would effectually keep down any spirit of insubordination in the constantly increasing slave population.

If the *fait accompli* of Mr. Gladstone should ever be accomplished, and the Southern Confederacy become a nation, her chivalry, if

they know anything of the capabilities of a strong military government, on the European model, will establish slavery and the slave trade on a foundation which will go far to render them safe from the hostility of any existing power.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CONFEDERATE CLERGY AND SLAVERY.

(10th September 1863.)

To the Editor of the "Daily News."

SIR, – You are aware that ninety-eight ministers of Christian churches in the Slave States of America have addressed the "Christians throughout the world" in defence of the Southern rebellion. Will you allow me, as one of those appealed to, to make a few observations on this document? A brief analysis of it may, I think, be instructive. The plan upon which it proceeds is simple and ingenious, and was the only plan which could have been adopted with the smallest hope of success.

I will begin by stating what the address is *not*. It is not an appeal to the understanding. It does not even profess to be so. It does not do its work by argument. It does not say, I

will prove to the satisfaction of your judgment that we are in the right and our enemies in the wrong. When you have read it, you do not ask yourself whether the ninety-eight have proved their case. You ask yourself why, having stated their case, they decline to enter upon the proof of it. Logic forms no part of the plan of the ninety-eight. Rhetoric is their weapon. They eschew logic. After mature reflection they probably thought that direct appeals to men's understandings would not conduce to the good of the cause which they had taken up.

Having stated what the address is not, I will now state what it is. It is an appeal to the feelings of the reader in behalf of the people of the Confederate States, founded on a highly-wrought general description of their supposed condition as an independent people, the victim of a gigantic outburst of cruelty and oppression on the part of the Federal government. Of course, the only question of real interest to the Christian world is whether that description is true or false. Its truth is made to rest, not upon any coherent statement of facts from which the reader might draw his own conclusion (for the

address contains no such statement), but on the unsupported authority of the ninety-eight ministers. They could, of course, give no proof of their trustworthiness; but all they could do they have done. They have made the most vehement protestations of their love of truth, the purity of their motives, their capability of judging, and their high religious principles. This last point was important, for nothing so predisposes men to receive a statement favourably as to make it in the name of religion. Accordingly, the ninety-eight begin their address in this style :—

"In the name of our holy Christianity we address you, &c.

"We speak not in the spirit of controversy, not by political inspiration; but, as the servants of the Most High God, we speak the truth in love concerning things which make for peace, &c.

"We feel most deeply impressed by the conviction that for our own sake; for the sake of our posterity; for the sake of humanity; for the sake of the truth; and, above all, for the sake of our Redeemer's Kingdom, it behoves us to testify, &c

"We put forth this address after much prayer, solemnly invoking the blessing of Almighty God, and committing what we say to that Providence by which we trust we are directed, and by whose authority and power the governments of the earth stand or fall, &c.

"If anything that compromised the simplicity, dignity, and purity of Christian duty moved us to issue this address, we should deserve to have it despised by you, and could hope for no blessing of God to rest upon it, &c."

Having thus prepared us to receive with reverent faith all that it should please them to affirm or suggest, the ninety-eight go, on by a mixed process of protest, appeal, lamentation, and remonstrance, coupled with a skilful omission of the most material points of the question, to present to us their case. In substance it is this. The war originated in mere wanton aggression against independent states. The Confederates have been called rebels, but they are not rebels; there is no rebellion in the case. Secession was merely an attempt to escape from oppression, to secure their rights and their tranquillity. The war was forced upon them. They have always desired peace; they desire

it now. But they can do nothing to promote it, for they are mere victims of persecution. The North only can make peace, and that only by laying down its arms. The South can only defend itself until it shall please the tyrant to stay his hand. In short, the Confederates are innocent sheep, and the Federals devouring wolves. The bloodshed can cease only when the Federals shall be tired of slaughter, or when the last of the Confederates has been exterminated.

Such is the picture which (when taken out of its ornamental frame) the ninety-eight, "deeply impressed with the conviction that, for the sake of the truth, it behoves them to testify," have drawn for us of the Southern rebellion.

On the question of slavery the ninety-eight proceed upon precisely the same plan. They must, of course, begin by exhibiting their titles to trustworthiness; and accordingly they set off in this fashion :—

"With all the facts of the system of slavery in its practical operation before us, 'as eye witnesses and ministers of the Word, having had perfect understanding of all things' on

this subject of which we speak, we may surely claim respect for our opinions and statements. Most of us have grown up from childhood among the slaves; all of us have preached to and taught them the Word of Life; have administered to them the ordinances of the Christian Church; sincerely love them as souls for whom Christ died; we go among them freely, and know them in health and sickness, in labour and rest, from infancy to old age. We are familiar with their physical and moral condition, and alive to all their interests; and we testify in the sight of God, &c."

Having thus predisposed us to a favourable reception of their testimony, they proceed to lay it before us. It consists substantially of these four propositions :—

1. The relation of master and slave is not incompatible with our holy Christianity.

2. The condition of the slaves is happy and prosperous.

3. The South has done more than any people on earth for the Christianisation of the African race.

4. (In a postscript to the address.) Rather more than one-third of the adult white popula-

tion, and one-fourth of the adult coloured population, of the Confederate States are communicants of Christian churches.

Now, I must be allowed to say that an appeal to the Christian world upon this plan is in the very highest degree unsatisfactory. Here is a cause which even a London club sympathiser must allow to be doubtful, and which the rest of the civilized world, who have certain fixed ideas (prejudices the ninety-eight will call them) on the advantages of stable government and the enormities of slavery, look upon as something worse than doubtful. Ninety-eight clergymen address us in its defence. We, of course, know nothing of them but their names; they stand towards us in a false position at starting, because their address comes forth from a place where any expression of opinion unfavourable to slavery or to the rebellion seriously compromises a man's personal safety. A cause needed to be defended by very strong arguments to overcome so considerable a load of prepossession against it, and lo! the ninety-eight absolutely decline to argue it at all. They call upon us to believe them upon their mere word, and give us no proof of their trustworthiness except a string of

violent protestations of their piety and love of truth, forgetting how constantly this kind of pretension is put forward by the most unscrupulous advocates of the worst causes.

At page 1 (or 3) the reader will find that the ninety-eight "could not hope for the blessing of God to rest upon their address if they were moved to make it by (amongst other things) an inclination to meddle with political questions." At page 4 he will find that "to discuss the causes of the war involves much more than as Christian ministers they feel it their province to argue," and that accordingly they "do not propose to discuss them." At pages 7–8 he will find that on "the whole question of slavery, although they fear no investigation and decline no debate, they would not, in an hour like this, and in an address which is principally a protest, invoke the spirit of controversy."

Now, all this, I repeat, is in the highest degree unsatisfactory. You understand the position of a man who says to you, "I refuse to discuss such or such a question, because, in whatever way it may be decided, my case is not affected by that decision;" but it is very difficult indeed to understand the position of a set of men

who, taking upon themselves to defend a certain course of political action, disclaim all intention to meddle with political questions; who, identifying themselves with one of the parties to a war, refuse to discuss the causes of the war; who, admitting that their principal object in what they are doing is the preservation of a certain social institution, will not enter into controversy on the merits of that institution. The question whether the sin and misery of this war lies at the door of Jefferson Davis, or at the door of Abraham Lincoln; whether, as a good citizen and a good Christian, it is the duty of Jefferson Davis or the duty of Abraham Lincoln to lay down his arms, and give up the point in dispute, is not only a political question, but it is one which it is impossible to decide without discussing the causes of the war, and the institution of slavery; and yet the ninety-eight decline to discuss political questions, decline to discuss the causes of the war, decline to discuss the institution of slavery. Surely the logical conclusion was to be silent, or to throw their address into the fire. Not at all; they launch it upon the world, and assure us over and over again in every variety of form, on

the faith of Christian ministers, that the whole sin and misery lies at the door of Abraham Lincoln; that his obstinacy and wickedness, and that of his people, is the sole obstacle to peace; that slavery is compatible with Christianity; that the slaves are happy and prosperous; and that the African race owes more to the slaveowners and their clergy than to any other body of people in the world. There is nothing so absurd, nothing so wicked, that it may not plausibly be defended by this method. The pickpocket, the burglar, and the footpad may denounce the penalties of the law as cruel and tyrannical coercion against the exercise of a commendable branch of industry, and, when called upon to make good their position, may modestly decline all controversy on so difficult a question in social science as the institution of property.

There is, however, no novelty in the address of the ninety-eight. It is little more than a repetition of the declamations which have been poured forth by English sympathisers for two years past in reviews, in newspapers, at public meetings, and in both houses of Parliament. It rests upon precisely the same foundation.

It is an appeal for peace, a protest against war; an appeal and a protest of that kind which all parties to all wars, good or bad, are at all times ready to make. It assumes that the sole author of the war is the enemy; that upon the enemy rests the undivided responsibility for the whole of the misery and bloodshed; that the enemy only can restore peace, and that only by laying down his arms and giving up the point in dispute; that he only incurred any moral responsibilities in regard to the origin of the war, and he only has any duties to perform in regard to its cessation. It does not argue against the contrary set of assumptions, it merely ignores them. The ingenuity of the plan is admirable. War is full of crimes and horrors; peace is full of goodness and loveliness. Jefferson Davis and his Confederates did nothing to bring on this war, and can do nothing to stop it; Abraham Lincoln and his Federals wickedly began this war, and it can only cease when they desist from their wickedness; it follows that every page of rhetoric on the miseries of war and the delights of peace is the condemnation of Lincoln and the vindication of Davis; and, accordingly, on this plan the ninety-

eight send forth to the world their eleven pages of rhetoric.

There is only one possible answer to such advocacy as this: "We decline to accept your authority, and we call upon you for your proofs." In return for their eleven pages of rhetoric, I will merely propose to the ninety-eight four short and plain questions :—

1. Was there or was there not, at the end of 1860, a government originating in the constitution of 1787, having a certain defined jurisdiction over the entire body of the American people, from the frontier of Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, a government which for seventy-two years had, within its constitutionally defined limits, been, in fact, acknowledged and obeyed by that people?

2. When Mr. Jefferson Davis and certain other leaders, drawing after them the people of the southern section of that great territory, threw off the jurisdiction of that government, declared themselves independent, seized the forts, dockyards, custom houses, arsenals, munitions of war, and other property held in trust by that government for the benefit of the entire people; levied and organised an army, and opposed by

force of arms the resumption of that property by its legal owners; did not these acts constitute rebellion? Have not all governments on record considered such acts as rebellion, and resisted them accordingly?

3. If so, I will ask the ninety-eight to particularise the acts of oppression, the constitutional rights denied or withheld, the duties of rulers towards subjects violated or unperformed, which afford a moral justification of that rebellion.

4. If the ninety-eight (unable to give these particulars) justify that rebellion on a different ground, viz., alarm for the safety of the institution of slavery, then I call upon them to show that the claims of that institution to the approbation and support of the Christian world are such as to outweigh the mass of misery and crime which was the necessary consequence of that rebellion.

When they have answered these questions, in such a way as to convince the understandings and satisfy the moral and religious principles of men of sense and virtue, but not until then, will they be entitled to address the Christian world in the name of humanity, truth, purity, and the interests of their Redeemer's Kingdom.

American slavery has been before the world for so long a period, it has been seen and described by so many unexceptionable witnesses, both English and American, that the Christian world is perfectly familiar with its great features. We know quite well what to think of it, and accordingly, when, after an ostentatious profession of a thorough and minute acquaintance with its practical working, the ninety-eight tell us that slavery is not un-Christian, that the slaves are happy and prosperous, that the South has done more than any people on earth for the Christianisation of the African race, and that "the presence of the Africans in the Slave States is an occasion of gratitude on their behalf before God, seeing that thereby Divine Providence has brought them where missionaries of the Cross may freely proclaim to them the word of salvation," one finds it difficult to believe that one is not listening to some piece of hideous irony. You can understand a defender of the slave trade who should tell you that, when you take an African from his native shore, put him on board ship, and bring him across the Atlantic, you are removing him from a country of barbarous

heathens to one of civilised Christians; and, in so far as treading the soil of a Christian country makes a man a Christian, that argument is sound. But how does slavery tend to Christianise four millions of negroes born upon the soil of America, and who know nothing of Africa but the name? Slavery or no slavery, the American negroes are within reach of Christian teaching. Let slavery in America die to-morrow, the ninety-eight are not thereby compelled to abdicate their functions as ministers of religion. Do they mean to assert that it is easier for them to lead a slave than to lead a free man into the path of salvation? The only plausible foundation for that view of the subject is one which they do not recognise; it is that the great Christian virtue of forgiveness of injuries is so efficacious to salvation that its presence will outweigh the absence of a multitude of others. One can understand a Christian minister addressing a slave in some such language as this: "I see in you the victim of a system of injustice and cruelty; you are reduced by the wickedness of your fellow-man to a condition of ignorance, sin, degradation, and physical suffering; you are almost wholly deprived by him of the two bets

and noblest gifts of God to man, conjugal love and parental love. If you bear this dreadful lot with patience, and freely forgive those who have inflicted it upon you, the God of the Christians, who commands you when you pray to Him to say, Forgive me my trespasses as I forgive the trespass against me, will, in taking account of your sins, not overlook in you this the greatest of all the Christian virtues." But the ninety-eight have shut themselves out from this view of the subject, for they deny that the slave is either injured or miserable; and even though they should give up the happy and contented theory of slavery, and thereby place themselves in a position to give hopes of salvation to the negro on the ground of his forgiveness of the white man's injustice, what hopes will they hold out to the white man, the author of that injustice? Are the ninety-eight prepared to preach salvation to the blacks at the expense of the salvation of the whites?

As ministers of the religion of truth, the ninety-eight could, of course, not deny point-blank that slavery is attended with misery and sin; but they would have us believe that this is no more than arises in everything human from the in-

firmity of human nature. "We deplore," say they, "abuses in this as in other relations of mankind." Human selfishness, vice, or weakness will, no doubt, intrude, more or less, into the most perfect systems of social life framed by the best and wisest of men; but the ninety-eight must not expect, by general observations on human infirmity, to persuade us that the enormities of slavery are in spite of the system and not in consequence of it.

I will propose a very simple test to the ninety-eight. I will call their attention to one of these enormities, the frequent infliction of torture, by the lash or in other ways, upon the slaves, male and female, with a view to extract from them the quantum of labour needful to make the cultivation of the soil profitable to the owner. The ninety-eight will not deny the fact of that cruelty. Will they deny that the wilful infliction of torture upon helpless human beings by other human beings is a violation of the spirit of a religion of peace, gentleness, and forbearance? Will they deny that under a system of free labour it is unknown and impossible? Will they deny that, under the system of slavery, such cruelty is a necessity of productive industry from

which there is no escape? If they deny this, what other mode of getting the work done by the slaves on a cotton or a sugar plantation will they point out? The planters are the best judges of the necessities of their system. It is absurd to suppose that they are naturally less humane than other men. The most hard-hearted planter in America will not torture his slaves if he can get the work done in any other way. If you withhold from the labourer the reward of his labour, and, by making him your property, virtually engage to feed and house and clothe him as you would a horse or an ox, what conceivable motive do you leave him to labour for you except the fear of bodily pain? And if the fear of the pain is never to be followed by the pain, how long is the fear likely to survive that immunity? Let the ninety-eight not endeavour to escape from the subject, but look it fairly in the face, and deny, if they can, that cruelty is a practical necessity of the system and a practical defiance of the teaching of the Saviour.

I will propose another test to the ninety-eight. I will ask them to pass in review the other salient features of slavery. 1st. The frequent

permanent separation of parents from their children, and of husbands from their wives, which is inevitable when once they become the objects of purchase and sale; the indifference to those domestic relations produced by the liability to that separation; and the encouragement given to that indifference by the white master with a view to spare himself the pain of shame and remorse on the occasion of such separations. Is this a part of Christian morals?

2nd. The sale of mulatto slave girls for notorious purposes of sexual immorality. Is this a part of Christian morals?

3rd. I will not ask you, sir, to stain your columns with any minute description of the state of morals as regards the relations between the sexes in the slave states. Nor is it necessary. All the world is acquainted with it. Nor is any one ignorant of the various incidents which precede the regular supply of the markets of the south with adequate quantities of the living human commodity produced in the more northern slave states. It is the special industry of those states, and is not carried on secretly or with any sense of shame. Is this a part of Christian morals?

Now, the test I will propose to the ninety-eight is this. In their address they invoke the interests of their Redeemer's Kingdom. Will they go up into their pulpits and denounce the judgments of the Redeemer against these habitual and flagrant violations of the spirit of the Redeemer's teaching, or of His express commands? Will they do this Sunday after Sunday until they find that their preaching has produced its legitimate fruit? They will not deny that this is the appropriate duty of a minister of religion. If they are not upon the earth for this, for what are they here? It is more particularly their duty to rebuke those sins which are the most openly and frequently practised by the people amongst whom they live. Is there one of the ninety-eight who will say that he has taken that course? Is there one of them who does not know that, if he took that course, one month would not elapse before he received a notice to quit the country, which it would be sheer madness to disregard? Would any such consequence follow upon his preaching unpalatable truths to his congregation in a country where slavery had no existence? The ninety-eight know that it would not. It is idle to suppose that a Southern planter is of a more

sensitive nature than other men. Preach to him upon the sin of avarice, or drunkenness, or revenge, or worldliness, and he will praise you for a good practical minister; but preach to him (in a place of public worship) on humanity, on chastity, on the sanctity of the marriage tie, on the sanctity of the parental relation, on the duties which the rich and powerful owe to the poor and helpless, on the obligation which rests on men to strive to make themselves and all around them (whether their skins be white, or black, or brown) constantly happier, and wiser, and better; preach to him on such topics as these, and, if your words have in them one spark of the fire of eloquence, he will listen to you with alarm and anger, and will tell you, and tell you truly, that you are undermining the institutions of the country.

The ninety-eight tell us that one-third of the adult whites, and one-fourth of the adult blacks, are communicants. If they had first satisfied us that this was all that it was needful to do to make Christians of them, their statistics, however futile for any other purpose, would at least have proved something in favour of the Southern clergy as ministers of religion. But they will scarcely get the "Christians throughout

the world" to accept this view of Christianity. We are accustomed to believe that there is such a thing as Christian character; that it was an important part of the mission of the Author of our religion to lay down principles of human conduct. We read in the Bible that He divided human duty into two great branches, duty to God and duty to our neighbour, and no minister (even of the ninety-eight) has yet arrived at the point of denying that the negro slave is, in the Christian sense, the neighbour of the white man. If, when we object to the ninety-eight that the system of society which they uphold is one which presents an insuperable bar to their performing themselves, or teaching to other men, their duty to their neighbour, and which compels them to connive at general violations of the command of the Saviour on vital points of human conduct, we are to be told, in reply, that twenty-five to thirty per cent. of the population are communicants, we can only say that that answer is worthy of the cause in defence of which it is employed. To eliminate from Christianity everything which can bring it into relation with human conduct is, no doubt, an indispensable preliminary to the

operation of proving that slavery is a Christian institution.

A Christian minister in a slave state appears to us ordinary Christians on this side of the Atlantic as near an approach to a contradiction in terms as it is easy to conceive. Many excellent American clergymen have, from time to time, gone down into that dreary moral wilderness, south of the River Ohio, hoping to find in it a field for their labours; but they have not been long in discovering the impossibility of the task. It might have been possible to preach with success against a prevailing iniquity, however powerful and numerous those who practised it, if it had been no more than a morbid excrescence on society, a disease in an otherwise healthy body. But it was hopeless to preach against an organised system of cruelty and vice, supported by the public opinion sanctioned by the laws, and interwoven with the industry of the country. It was possible for the state to destroy slavery, but it was not possible for the clergy to mend it; accordingly no reasonable person is disposed to impute it as a fault to the clergy of the American slave states that, at the end of seventy years

they leave that society in the same degraded and un-Christian state in which they found it. A system which set Christianity at defiance was not to be amended by Christian ministers. There was only one effectual and appropriate step which they could take, and, unfortunately, as a body, they have never taken it. It was to wash their hands of the iniquity, to put upon record their solemn protest against the slaveowner as the enemy of their great Master, and to retire from the country. If the Christian clergy of America had unanimously proclaimed slavery to be un-Christian, and had withdrawn from it, the institution could not long have survived that blow. They have thrown away that great occasion of benefiting the human race, and of obtaining a new triumph for their religion. With some honourable exceptions they remained in the midst of the sin, engaged in the ignoble task of making things pleasant to the sinner; half ashamed, indeed, of that task, and exhibiting occasional symptoms of shame and remorse. The result is what might have been expected. We have proof in this address that from toleration some at least of them have arrived, by what gradations we know not, at the point of open

approval. It might have been supposed that the apostasy of Christian ministers from the great moral principles of Christianity would be the climax, but these ninety-eight Confederate clergymen have shown that it was possible to go one step further, for they have not feared to invoke, in favour of a system of society founded in cruelty, licentiousness, and moral darkness, the name of Him who came upon earth to give to His creatures an example of beneficence, purity, and truth.

CHAPTER XIV.

EARL RUSSELL ON THE AMERICAN WAR.

(16th June 1864.)

To the Editor of the "Daily News."

SIR,—I find in Lord Russell's speech of Thursday last, in the House of Lords, these words, as reported in your paper of the 10th instant: "Here is this slaughter of thirty or forty thousand men on one side, and probably no less on the other, going on for the purpose of preventing certain sovereign states from acting upon that principle of independence which in 1778 was applied to this country by their ancestors, of whom they are so proud."

May I be allowed to ask what there is in common between the American war of independence last century and the slaveowners' rebellion of 1861, that Lord Russell should think himself entitled to taunt America with

her reverence for the patriots who carried her safely through the first, as being inconsistent with her opposition to the second? If our histories have not deceived us, the first was a rebellion of thirteen colonies against a mother country, four thousand miles off, arising out of her attempt to tax the colonists for purposes unconnected with them or their country. The success of that rebellion has converted those thirteen little colonies into one of the most prosperous and powerful nations on the earth. The rebellion of 1861—for it is a rebellion, and the attempt of Lord Russell to throw over it a colouring of legality and virtue by the ingenious phrase of "sovereign states acting on a principle of independence" will not save it from the fate of being handed down in history as the most unprincipled rebellion on record, having no plea to put forward in its defence except its identification with a cause which every good man throughout the civilised world repudiates—the rebellion of 1861, I say, is an attempt on the part of six millions of whites, by the overthrow of a constitution which morally and politically binds them as much as men can can be bound by any human institution, to

separate from their eighteen millions of fellow-whites, because the continuance of the union between them endangers the permanence of an institution which keeps down four millions of blacks under the heels of those six millions of whites. The success of that second rebellion, if it should succeed, will go far to undo all that the first rebellion has done to make America great and prosperous. I can see no resemblance between these two wars, the war of independence and the war of the slaveowners, except that they were both rebellions; but if the descendants of rebels are to be held disentitled to resist rebellion, I can see a very strong resemblance between the situation of Great Britain and that of the United States. As a minister of the Crown, is not Lord Russell himself specially responsible for the safety of a dynasty which owes its origin to a rebellion? a rebellion which by force of arms drove the legitimate sovereign of England from his throne and his native land.

When Lord Russell speaks of "the slaughter of thirty or thousand men on each side going on in America," he does not, I presume, mean to affirm that sixty or eighty thousand men

have lost their lives in the recent battles. This would be carrying rhetorical amplification a little too far. Still, if we take one-fourth part of Lord Russell's figures, every man of common humanity must shudder when he reflects upon such an amount of bloodshed. But will Lord Russell tell us what exact loss of life he thinks will justify a sovereign ruling over thirty millions of human beings in abandoning a cause on the success of which he believes the permanent fate of his people as a great and prosperous nation to be dependent? Will Lord Russell tell us what his own limit of justifiable bloodshed would have been, if he had been called upon to say yes or no to the question whether British India should persevere in her resistance to the Sepoy rebellion, or whether Great Britain should persevere in her resistance to the ambition of the first Napoleon? Will he tell us how many lives of Danish soldiers are equivalent to the integrity of the kingdom of Denmark? or how many English lives (if the case should arise) Queen Victoria may properly sacrifice in the attempt to suppress an armed movement "on the principle of independence" in Ireland? These are difficult questions; and

I am afraid that, in making those comparative estimates of value (lives of men against lives of nations), statesmen do not always use the same measure, and that a practical answer for the use of their own country is apt to be very different from an opinion obligingly volunteered for the benefit of a rival nation. The political interests of the British aristocracy are so little concerned in the question whether the United States shall sink from the condition of a first-rate political power to that of a conglomerate of ten or a dozen little independent states, squabbling and bickering amongst each other, in imitation of their betters in Europe (for that, at no very remote period, would be the consequence of a separation between the Northern and Southern States), that it would not be surprising if an English nobleman should hold the loss of one single human life to be too high a price to pay for the preservation of the American Union. It is quite natural that an English peer, addressing English peers at Westminster, should see nothing but absurdity and wickedness in a set of federal republicans on the other side of the Atlantic spending money and blood in the maintenance

of a federal republic. So long, however, as the noblemen and gentlemen who rule over us do not go beyond a simple expression of opinion, the matter is not one of much practical importance; for, while the world lasts, peoples will continue to act upon their own estimates of the value of their own institutions; and no conceivable amount of adverse opinion four thousand miles off will shake the faith of a citizen of the United States, whose understanding has not been weakened and debased by the practice of slavery, in the goodness of a constitution under which the nation has increased tenfold in number, and more than tenfold in wealth, in the course of less than a century; a constitution under which the people have never had a serious disagreement amongst themselves, except upon the one accursed thing out of which this war has arisen, and for the extirpation of which that constitution provides an all-sufficient machinery.

I say "so long as the ruling class in England does not go beyond a simple expression of opinion," because, with the experience of the past before us, we cannot, of course,

altogether blind ourselves to the risk of their leading us like sheep, on the most plausible pretexts, into a war against republicanism in America, as they led us in 1793 into a war against republicanism in France.

CHAPTER XV.

(March 1865.)

I SAW it stated some days ago in your American intelligence that General Sherman had informed a private citizen of Georgia that "to talk of reconstruction was useless; that Georgia was still in the Union, and that when the people should quit the rebellion and send members to Congress Georgia would resume her Union functions and advantages."

Is not this the language of a sensible and clear-headed man? Is it not idle to consider plans for rebuilding one's house, if one's house is still standing, and if one believes it to be an excellent house?

The fitting reply to the former joint occupant, who talks of reconstruction, is the reply of General Sherman: You foolishly quitted a good house, where (except on one subject) we had lived to-

gether in harmony for a great many years, and you are now without a roof over your head. Come back to me and you will be well received; but I will neither allow you to pull down the old house, and rebuild it after a fashion of your own, nor will I allow you to build a rival house on the other side of the road, from whence you may keep me in perpetual hot water. As for the one question on which we quarrelled, I have now the power to set it at rest for ever, and I am going to do so. That question disposed of, you know, as well as I do, that there is nothing to prevent our living in the old house peaceably and prosperously to the end of our days.

Nothing is more natural than that the leaders of a rebellion, having failed in their attempt to destroy the Union, the work of the men of 1787, should wish to set up a union of their own manufacture; and, under the plausible designation of state rights, obtain admission for a principle which might enable them to renew their treason on the first favourable opportunity. But the interests of ambitious rebel chiefs are seldom identical with the interests of their followers. The poor suffering dupes of Jefferson Davis and his brother conspirators may be presumed to be slowly opening

their eyes to that truth. I see it said that when the rebellion has been put down, and the Union restored, it will be necessary to take into consideration the question of state rights, with a view to its satisfactory settlement. I confess I can see no such necessity. The united skill of all the phrase-makers in America will never succeed in making the matter clearer than the constitution of 1787 has made it. That constitution has given sovereign powers to the governments of the particular states within certain defined limits. No effort of language will ever make it clearer than it is already that in the powers so given is *not* included a power to release the people of a particular state from their allegiance to the general government.

The same instruments which created the one created the other; gave sovereign powers to the government of the states, and other sovereign powers to the government of the nation. Let it be remembered that the work of George Washington and the men of 1787 was the constitution of a federal republic, which is as different a thing from a federation of states as it is from European monarchy. There is but one way of constructing a federal republic, which is

to take the whole of the sovereign powers, and apportion them, on some convenient and intelligible principle, between the government of the particular states on the one hand, and the national government (embracing the entire country) on the other; to trace out two distinct and separate fields of jurisdiction, and to make each government (the general and the particular) supreme within its own proper field, and powerless outside of that field. This is what the constitution of 1787 did; it conferred upon the government of the states all sovereign powers which were not specially reserved to the government of the nation, and it then defined, one by one, in express terms, those reserved powers. We English seem to have great difficulty in understanding how there should be two supreme governments within the same state, and yet our own municipalities, although exercising their powers upon objects of comparatively trifling importance, supply us with an illustration of the principle, which ought to be intelligible to us. It is evident that, if in America both governments are supreme within separate fields, the only difficulties that can arise are those of disputed jurisdiction, and the framers of the constitution

provided for those difficulties in the only way in which it seems possible to provide for them, viz., by erecting a tribunal to adjudicate on such questions. It might at any moment become a question whether, in some particular matter, the government of Alabama was not trenching on the sovereign rights of the government at Washington, or the government at Washington trenching on the sovereign rights of the government of Alabama; but it could by no possibility, under the American constitution, become a question whether the government of Alabama could say to the people of Alabama, "Your obedience to the government at Washington is entirely at your own discretion, and you may throw it off altogether whenever you please." It is just as absurd to moot such a question under the American constitution as it would be, under the British constitution, to moot the question whether the House of Commons has power to abolish the House of Lords, or the House of Lords to depose Queen Victoria. When politicians raise such questions they are hatching treason. When Colhoun, more than thirty years ago, and when Jefferson Davis, in 1861, took up that phrase of state rights, and raised it to the dignity

of a doctrine with contested interpretations, they were simply contriving a convenient cloak for treason. Nothing is more easy than to engraft upon vague political phrases interpretations which, if accepted, convert unprincipled conspirators into high-minded patriots; and, unfortunately, bystanders are only too happy sometimes to accept such interpretations, if thereby they can obtain the luxury of free indulgence in a national antipathy.

President Jackson, and, thirty years later, President Lincoln, dealt with this so-called doctrine of state rights, and its accompaniment of South Carolina interpretation, in the only way in which a government (not fallen into idiotcy) can deal with such dangerous follies, and they announced that, if it should be made the groundwork for overt acts of resistance to national government, these acts would be treated as acts of treason, and the treason put down and punished.

When a constitution confers certain powers upon a general government, defines those powers in express terms, and supplies it with the necessary machinery to repel all attempts to subvert those powers, it has done all that a constitution

can do to establish a sovereignty. Nothing remains to be done except to put the machinery in motion if any such attempts are made, and this is exactly what the government of Abraham Lincoln has been doing since 1861. To talk of reconstructing the constitution with a view to the settlement of a so-called question of state rights is as though, after suppressing an armed attempt of the people of Scotland to secede from England, an English minister should set on foot a search for some new form of words which might increase the binding force of national unions. Armed attempts to subvert legally constituted governments must be met as they occur by armed force. The security of a government against such attempts lies in the strength of its defensive machinery, not in combinations of phrases. The object of reconsidering state rights must be either to destroy for ever the assumed right of secession, or to establish that right. The first would be an act of supererogation, the second an act of suicide. A right of secession is as utterly irreconcilable with the letter as it is with the spirit of the existing constitution. The constitution being a written document, of no great length, any person

of common understanding may convince himself of that fact by simply reading it. If, on the other hand, the Northern people have not discovered that to establish in any form, with any precautions, a right of secession is to abandon in 1865 the great principle of vitality holding them together as a nation, for which they have been fighting since 1861, then indeed has all this blood been shed in vain.

CHAPTER XVI.

(1st May 1865.)

Mr. Mason, the Confederate Envoy, in his letter to the Editor of the "Index," assures the British public that none will view the crimes which have been committed at Washington with more abhorrence than the people of the South. As regards that considerable portion of the people of the South who were either duped or dragooned into apparent complicity with the slave-owners' rebellion, the assurance of Mr. Mason is quite unnecessary. We none of us doubt that the loyal citizens of the South, now that Southern loyalty has been relieved from the pressure of a system of deception and terrorism, such as the world had not seen since 1793, will express their opinion of the murder of the chief magistrate of the Republic in language quite as strong, if not quite so classical, as any that Mr. Mason would

be likely to put into their mouths. Whether the sentiment of disapprobation which exists within the breast of Mr. Mason himself is of that degree of strength which amounts to horror, we cannot tell, since he has not thought fit to give expression to his feelings. With similar discretion he has abstained from any opinion in regard to what his chief is likely to think of the matter.

Whether the President of the late Confederacy, who, at Richmond, under his own eye, so to speak, week after week and month after month, allowed hundreds of prisoners of war, by a process of lingering torture, to sink into the grave from want of the bare necessaries of healthy life (I speak of things which rest upon testimony too eminent to be disputed)—whether he will be startled into horror by this higher and more dazzling effort of wickedness, it is vain to conjecture. Mr. Davis will, perhaps, form no exception to a very common rule. A party leader, however unscrupulous, seldom has any toleration for the crime of a too zealous follower which brings the common cause into disrepute, and when the cry of horror which bursts forth on the perpetration of some act of very rare atrocity

is too loud and universal to be disregarded, of course, the leader joins the cry ; nor does he do so insincerely, for when leaders have not directly instigated the evil deeds of their subordinates, they easily persuade themselves that no part of the responsibility rests with them.

That General Lee's horror at this barbarous act will be deep and genuine, we none of us can doubt, and we may reasonably hope that it will be accompanied by serious reflection in regard to the causes from which political crimes of atrocious violence usually proceed. Such reflections can scarcely fail to lead, in the minds of those who make them, to a most salutary extension of the doctrine of moral responsibility. When party leaders deliberately withdraw great social questions from free discussion within the walls of the national council chamber, to receive their practical solution on the field of battle, the world will justly lay upon those leaders a large share of the responsibility which attaches to all acts of violence, whether perpetrated in due course of legitimate warfare or otherwise, by individual men in the course of the contest. Mr. Mason, in the last sentence of his letter, endeavours, on behalf of himself and his friends, to

shake off this responsibility and thrust it upon the government of the United States, but he forgets, first, that with English readers no weight can attach to the bare assertion of one of the parties to the contest, and, secondly, that on the question of responsibility the presumption is always against the rebel.

Macaulay, in his history, asks himself this question : "What will justify resistance to a bad government ?" His answer is one which will be echoed by every man of sense and virtue. He says that the evil must be grave, that the regular and peaceable modes of defence must be exhausted, before the aggrieved party resorts to extremity ; that an awful responsibility is incurred ; that the burden of proof lies on him who has ventured on so desperate an expedient, and that, if he fails to vindicate himself, he is justly liable to the severest penalties. The Southern rebels will scarcely find that the burden of proof is, in their case, rendered less onerous by the fact that the government which they resisted was one freely chosen by the entire body of the people, and that, after four years of war, the list of their grievances has yet to be produced. Mr. Mason may say, and may say with truth, that the

Southern grievance was Northern hatred of the great Southern institution, and that when the Southern leaders transferred the slavery question from the field of peaceable discussion into that of physical force they were acting on a conviction, justified by facts, that the cause of slavery would never receive fair play in the Congress of the United States; that a constantly increasing proportion of its members would be deaf to all arguments that could be adduced in its favour. To this, I grant that there is no reply. It is, indeed, the miserable truth. When a system of society is in itself a crime, against which human instincts rise up in irrepressible force, you can as little discuss it as you can discuss sacrilege or murder. When the election of Lincoln, in 1860, had proved that the Northern mind was at length fairly roused out of its long, dead sleep on the subject of slavery, Southern statesmen had three courses open to them; to defend the institution within the walls of Congress, to defend it with the sword, or to abandon it. They were sagacious enough to see that the first was to condemn it to a slow, lingering, but certain death. They failed to see that the sword was to condemn it to a death equally certain, but

speedy and violent; they had not the virtue or the wisdom to take the only remaining course, and to join with good and wise men, in every part of the country, in retiring, with as little injury to all parties, white or black, as was possible, from a position which was untenable. Unhappily, they chose the sword, and they cannot now be relieved from the consequences and the responsibilities of that choice. They are as little entitled to complain that the free states would not consent to the constitution being destroyed, and the nation broken up, as they are entitled to complain that the world insists upon laying the responsibility for the bloodshed, the misery, and the crimes where it justly and fairly rests.